R. CECIL HOPKINSON

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R. CECIL HOPKINSON

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R. CECIL HOPKINSON

LIEUTENANT, R.E.

MEMOIR

AND

LETTERS

CAMBRIDGE

PRINTED AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS

1918

This story of the life and death of CECIL HOPKINSON is given to his friends by his mother, and others who specially cared for him.

They desire to express here their gratitude for the help they have received from Sir A. W. Ward, Master of Peterhouse, and Mr J. B. Peace, Printer to the University.

CONTENTS

MEMOIR

PAGE

By Lady Ewing 1

By Mrs John Hopkinson 45

By Professor B. Hopkinson, Major . . 73

LETTERS

I. Before the War 81

II. In Training and at the Front . . 91

Appendix I. Memorandum on Lines of Communication 146

Appendix II. The Discussion Society . 150

Hark, the roar grows . . . the thunders reawaken—
We ask one thing, Lord, only one thing now:
Hearts high as theirs, who went to death unshaken,
Courage like theirs to make and keep their vow.

R. E. VERNÈDE.

R. CECIL HOPKINSON

BY HIS SISTER

Rudolf Cecil Hopkinson was born at Holmwood, Wimbledon Common, on July 10th, 1891. He was the sixth and youngest child of his parents. From both of them he had the advantage of unblemished heritage and high example. His father's name is among the great ones of Science. There was no great difference in age among his elder brothers and sisters; but there was a gap of eleven years between him and the one before. His advent, therefore, was a great experience to the rest of the family, particularly to his three sisters, enthusiastic school girls, who lavished observation and devotion on him. Thus he had more than the ordinary share of baby worship. It made little conscious difference to him. He accepted it as part of his daily life. It did not spoil him in the ordinary sense of the word, though it may have increased the old-fashioned, absent-minded tendencies which were his as a child. It also may have developed his very sweet temper and his extreme reasonableness, since he was seldom treated crossly or unreasonably and seldom behaved so. He was quite aware of his importance; yet it was in no spirit of arrogance that, on an occasion in his fourth or fifth year, when a cousin knocked him down, he said gravely, without any anger: "You must not do that; I am too precious." This detached impersonal view of himself was a characteristic which lasted throughout his life. It was exemplified before he won the famous long distance ski-ing race in Switzerland for the "Roberts of Kandahar" challenge cup in 1911. On being asked who was likely to win, he replied, without a

trace of self-consciousness, that he thought he was. He was never conceited or priggish.

When an Alpine accident deprived him of his father, two of his sisters and a brother, he was seven years old, too young to realise, in an ordinary way, the tragedy. The gloom thus caused was irksome and unnatural to him, and it was by way of a protest against it as well as to give expression to an irrepressible pleasure that, in a long silence during the lunch after the funeral, he exclaimed in his loud, childish voice to his sister: "I say Nelly, isn't this pudding nice?" But that he did appreciate what the loss meant to his mother was unmistakably shown by the messages which he wrote on pages torn from his little notebook, and passed to her during the homeward journey. The story of these missives is told in what she has written about him. They were the greatest comfort that any human being could give and were brought with a happy, natural simplicity, without any special demonstration. He always liked to have a note-book and tried to use it methodically, though he was never a tidy boy. When his scientific propensities were developing and he started collecting butterflies, the entry appeared in one of his books: "Saw two brimstones to-day, a he and a she." Another, when he was not more than nine or ten years old, reads: "This book belongs to R. C. Hopkinson, F.R.S.,—not him but his brother is." This was some years before the brother had become a Fellow. The child had a profound and enduring admiration for his brother. Once, when the mother was commenting with vexation on the dirty, untidy state of the room set aside as her eldest son's laboratory, Cecil stopped her by saying: "Let me remind you that Bertie has done very good work in this room!"

After the Alpine accident he exhibited great distress at the idea that his father's engineering plans should be left incomplete; but was soothed and satisfied when his brother,

abandoning a promising career at the bar, became an engineer and finished some of the work which the father had begun.

He was not precocious in his mental development except, perhaps, in the matter of science. In any branch of that subject he betrayed an interest and, often, a knowledge, quite remarkable in one so young. As a rule he was somewhat inarticulate and uncommunicative; but on scientific subjects his exuberant enthusiasm would loosen his tongue so that the words would tumble out, rendering him almost incoherent; and the slight stammer, always an endearing little characteristic of his, would become more marked. His love of science revealed, as nothing else, the quality of his mind.

His father's and brother's friends took special notice of him; their sympathy and interest being excited by his somewhat pathetic position as well as by his scientific proclivities which, mercifully, were too genuine and absorbing to him for his head to be turned by all the attention he received. And the intercourse with these wise men was, doubtless, good for him in many ways.

To mitigate the loneliness, however unconscious, of his position, his mother and sister made great efforts to provide him with young companionship. Some of his childish comrades remained his life-long friends. He was always glad to play with children of his own age; but was so self-sufficing and interested in his little scientific experiments, which did not appeal to most of his friends, that he was never at a loss when alone.

He was a thin, undersized little boy with a small, delicate face and (generally) grave, polite manners, old-fashioned but seldom self-conscious. There was an inherent courtesy about him, for, throughout his life, he was very sensitive of other people's feelings and had peculiarly fine perceptions.

He had a trick, which lasted well into his school-life, of signing his letters "Your dear Cecil" whoever his correspondent might be.

The outstanding feature of his young childhood was, to the writer's mind, his delicate health. Therefore much of this memoir bears more on that than on other aspects of him, as it had far-reaching results on his development. To overcome his tendency to asthma, constant vigilance and minute care were required, such as it would have been impossible for most children to receive without injury to character. It was not so with Cecil. He seemed to have a combination of qualities that saved him. In the first place he was richly endowed with pluck of a very high quality. It never deserted him, even during the sad last year of his life, as doctors and nurses all testify. He was moreover extremely level-headed and so free from interest in self that he never noticed or bothered about his symptoms and seldom felt ill. This was a great boon. He might struggle for breath during an attack of asthma and whimper a little after relief had come. But, in a few minutes, he would be as jolly as ever and ready for anything available. Essentially peace-loving, he submitted serenely to fuss about himself, though he disliked it greatly and appreciated unobtrusive care.

After a bout of illness his sister generally took him to the seaside for a few days. These outings had a great effect on him, not only in consolidating his health, but also in emphasizing certain traits in his character, especially his power of wholesome enjoyment, always a very living thing with him despite his grave, sedate little ways. Subject to the restrictions imposed by his delicacy, healthy enjoyment would be the order of the day. In the colder seasons Eastbourne was the favourite place, and the great thing was to spend most of the day scrambling about Beachy Head or

roaming over the Downs. He loved these walks. The possibility of adventure, often becoming reality, always appealed to him. He liked to get from one place to another "as straight as the crow flies." To overcome obstacles which might thus be encountered was part of the fun. The usual procedure was to throw a hat or an umbrella over a specially difficult hedge or stream and then consider how best to follow it. As may be imagined, resource and activity were often needed, and Cecil soon acquired both. He never showed any alarm or impatience, though sometimes the situation would have been sufficient excuse.

The greater aspects of Nature, especially the rolling Downs, were always a joy to him. The writer remembers how he asked her to close her eyes and be guided by him up some steep ground to an unexpected, beautiful viewpoint, and his pleasure at her surprise and admiration when the glorious scene was suddenly revealed. He had not, however, a keen eye for small beauties such as little ground flowers and so forth, though he appreciated them when they were pointed out to him. And in many respects his powers of observation were far from acute. If one wished to conceal anything from him, it could generally be done without much difficulty.

At Littlehampton, which was the favourite summer resort after illness, he probably got his first ideas of sailing. Many hours were spent on the sea and the River Aran. In the earlier expeditions a kind old sailor always accompanied the boy, who soon picked up sufficient sea lore to be able to dispense with other assistance than that of his sister. On these expeditions it was remarkable how he assumed responsibility, at once casting off the absent-minded feckless ways engendered by the anxious care with which other people managed his concerns ashore.

By nature he was extremely independent, and that he

should have accepted as he did the various restraints which his elders thought fit to impose on him because of his health, proved his sweetness of temper and balance of mind. He perceived that, by submitting, he stood a good chance of becoming strong enough in due time to dispense with them all. So he bore the vexatious restrictions unresentfully and did not allow them to interfere more than was necessary with his interests, while he took full advantage of them by permitting others to settle all the bothersome practical details of his life. He thus became casual and, sometimes, insufficiently self-assertive; but he preserved his imperturbable happy temper and his inward enthusiasms. Nevertheless these years of delicacy were real, hard discipline to him which strengthened his self-control and ability to submit cheerfully; so that, when freedom came, his adventurous spirit asserted itself with liberty but not licence and rejoiced the hearts of those who had been responsible for the delay in his reaching independence.

Of this period Lieut. Ewing writes:

It was in the summer of 1898 that I first became acquainted with Cecil; as years passed by the acquaintanceship ripened into a true friendship—one for which to be ever grateful. In those early days at Wimbledon we had many common pursuits which brought us together, cricket, croquet, billiards and such like. I well remember how at billiards Cecil, small though he was, seemed to grasp the angles and "Euclid" of the game in an extraordinarily short time. But even then his mind was set on more serious matters; he was already becoming inventive.

I call to mind the small room fitted up as a Laboratory, with Crookes's tubes and a Wimshurst machine forming the nucleus of its stores, in which he would spend hours probing for himself the mysteries of Electricity. I recall the enthusiasm with which he would announce his results. One might almost say it was there that he infused into his character those sparks of personal magnetism and fresh charm so familiar to those with whom he came into contact.

Of his school-days at St Paul's I know but little, except for rare meetings when he discussed matters of great moment to schoolboys—his work, his boxing, and his friendships with other boys. That they have become men—real "men" in its most true sense—recent years have proved.

The business of settling to which public school he should be sent was very difficult. Though he had distinguished himself in no way, good or bad, at the excellent private school which he attended in Wimbledon, the headmaster had discerned the latent power which, when unrestricted by delicate health and properly developed, might carry him far. The problem was to find a school which would adequately meet the requirements of his health and education. After much consideration he was sent, not to a boarding school, but to the school of his desire—St Paul's—at which both his brothers had been educated, the elder having had a brilliant career there. It gave Cecil a good education but, to begin with, put a great strain on his health. The chief drawback was the distance between his home on Wimbledon Common and the school—some seven miles. The difficulties of transit, before the days of motor omnibuses, were serious. He himself liked best to bicycle as many of his school-fellows did; but this, unfortunately, overtaxed his strength, especially in dusty weather. With a self-assertion, rare for him, he absolutely refused to use his mother's motor car, an unusual object in those days, after it had once made him late for school. He had all the ordinary schoolboy's objection to being different from his fellows and, at first, disliked the horse-cab which replaced the motor and ultimately proved to be the best means of conveyance. But he overcame the difficulty by inviting his school friends to share the cab. Thus, by some exercise of moral courage, for he had been mercilessly chaffed, he neatly converted his bane into a blessing to himself and to others; his friends were glad

enough of the lift, and the cab was often filled to overflowing with hilarious schoolboys.

But the trial came to an end when motor buses started running between Putney and Hammersmith. Thereafter the journey to school was easy and pleasant: first a walk or ride over Wimbledon Common and Putney Heath, then the rest of the way by motor bus like an ordinary schoolboy. With his eye for natural beauty, he came to love the wide expanse of Wimbledon Common with its romance and its comparative loneliness in the morning and evening.

His sister would frequently meet him at the end of his school day and the two generally contrived to have some fun before reaching home. Sometimes it would be shopping which was always interesting, or a "Fullers" tea. Generally there would be some special attraction on the Heath or the Common. Occasionally there was the rare delight of walking over the Common in a London fog; the general lack of landmarks and the gorse bushes, into which it was so easy to fall, adding zest to this not inconsiderable adventure. As he grew older and stronger, it was he, not she, who took the initiative. He always had plenty of determination and persistence, although, for the sake of peace and self-protection, he assumed a passive rôle when he conveniently could, and was chary of expressing his own opinions.

The growth of his activities is well illustrated in the letter of his friend Captain W. B. Carslake:

It is possible that my recollections of Cecil Hopkinson extend over a longer period than those of most of his friends, for, with the exception of a gap of some five years from the ages of fifteen to twenty, I knew him from his earliest boyhood.

We were first thrown together at the Kindergarten class started by his mother at Holmwood, and from that time till he had been at St Paul's school for two years he was my constant companion and playmate. Nearly every week-end I used to spend with him, sometimes at Holmwood, sometimes at the

old windmill at Ewhurst, which had been turned into a week-end resort, and many were the boyish adventures and trials of strength we had together: at Holmwood the climbing of every tree; wild chases round the garden on bicycles; wrestling matches on the lawn at which now one, now another proved the winner; and, on wet days, games of all sorts in the billiard room. Or again at the mill, whither we often motored on a Saturday to spend the night, where bathes in the open field and high swings on the rope hung from the top of the mill were varied by explorations of all the adjacent woods: or yet again in the Isle of Wight, where I spent a glorious fortnight with all the family, sailing every day in the little *Redwing*, and watching for hours, on one memorable occasion, the raising of the sunken *Gladiator*—such were the days I spent with Cecil as a boy, days which afford me some of the pleasantest memories of my life.

About this time, at the age of fourteen or fifteen, he began to show unmistakable signs of getting stronger, and his body became, at last, more adequate to the requirements of his energetic spirit. He grew rapidly both mentally and physically. The greater freedom given by increased strength was a joy to him which illuminated the charm of his disposition, as the sun lights up the beauties of a landscape hitherto somewhat obscured. He no longer deserved the name of "Nipper," bestowed on him by the grown-up friends whom he met during winter holidays in Switzerland, whither he was first taken when he was about thirteen years old. There the pure, keen air and sunlight and the outdoor life, suited him splendidly and had, probably, much to do with strengthening his constitution. He lost no time in learning to ski and, starting thus early and receiving first-rate instruction, he soon became uncommonly proficient at this strenuous sport. Like all such, it makes great demands on the courage, the endurance, and the unselfishness of those who pursue it with any vigour. As was expected by those who knew him, Cecil stood the test worthily, all the more so when he came to outstrip his companions in skill. But even

when he was quite a small boy it revealed his temper. For instance, on the occasion of a race at Villars in which Cecil was by far the youngest competitor, a portion of the route up the mountain side was such that no two skiers could pass each other unless the leader stood aside. This Cecil offered to do, feeling that he was holding back the competitor behind him, the ultimate winner of the race,—his instincts revolting against the possibility of taking unfair advantage of a better skier than himself.

Another anecdote redounds less to his credit and illustrates the inability to express himself easily which was very marked during his boyhood. He agreed to teach his eldest brother to ski after he himself had had the experience of one or two seasons. But the instruction seemed entirely to consist of Cecil's watching and saying at intervals, without irritation and without enthusiasm, "Buck up, buck up" to his brother, who would be struggling with his head more or less buried in the snow.

He was nineteen when he won the first of the races for the "Roberts of Kandahar" challenge cup. While he enjoyed the rôle of hero, which this victory thrust upon him, it was a considerable ordeal for the boy to have to make a speech of thanks for the cup when it was presented to him in the presence of a large and more or less august company at the Hotel Cecil the following spring. His speech was not without a certain youthful dignity, especially when he spoke of his profound admiration of Lord Roberts. But his language was somewhat unusual. He alluded to the winter visitors to Switzerland, including bishops, headmasters of great schools and the like, as "a sociable lot," and to the superb challenge cup which he held for the year as "this pleasant pot." Speaking of Lord Roberts he said:

In my position as spokesman for the prizewinners, it is also my pleasant duty to thank all patrons of winter sports and

especially the givers of the prizes of which we are the happy recipients. As for myself I have had the unexpected honour and good fortune to win the cup presented by Lord Roberts. Lord Roberts is a man whom I have always admired immensely, and I am sure we would all of us sooner win a trophy presented by him than by anyone else. Consequently I should like to take this opportunity of thanking him especially for giving his patronage to the great sport of ski-ing. Ski-ing is a sport which is still in its infancy, and though I consider that its principal scope lies in its practical application to mountaineering, yet the competitive side will always be important to a large number of people. Hence the patronage of a man like Roberts to this side of the sport is bound to have a good and lasting influence.

When the next season's race came round he effectually spoilt his chances by neglect of the necessary training, to the vexation of his more ambitious friends. He, however, insisted that it was a mistake to take such sport seriously.

Of Cecil's school days Dr Macaulay, late of St Paul's School, writes:

Cecil Hopkinson entered St Paul's School at Easter, 1904, when he was twelve years of age, and was elected a junior scholar in the following September. After a couple of years in the Classical Forms, he passed into Army B Form, where he remained for a year and a term, when he was elected a Senior Scholar. He then passed in September 1907 into the Mathematical Eighth Form, which is a preparatory form for the University. The writer remembers well with what joy he welcomed the advent of Hopkinson and two other boys into the form on almost the same day. They seemed to be carrying on a tradition, for all their brothers had been members of the form before them. Each possessed a marked individuality but they had one characteristic in common, an air of extreme youthfulness, so often seen in the youngest of a family. These three are mentioned here because Hopkinson of all boys would like his contemporaries to be remembered with him. One of them, F. H. Wharton, a truly lovable and fascinating personality, was amongst the Paulines who fell in the first year of the war; Hopkinson has now followed him, and has been in turn followed

by the third, Kenneth Garnett. Cecil and Kenneth became one another's greatest friends and each rejoiced in the numerous successes and triumphs gained by the other before and during the war.

Cecil was not strong in the early years at school; he was under the average height, but later grew phenomenally, a record of six inches in his last year, and became quite robust; he was characterized by a quaint seriousness and quite unconscious determination. He knew his own mind, and no hesitation of any kind ever seemed to cross it. When asked at the age of eight or nine what he was going to be, he answered at once that he was going to be a scholar of St Paul's. Having become a scholar, he seemed to make up his mind equally quickly, and decided to become an engineer.

At first he was too small to take a prominent part in athletics, but was keenly interested in them and in all school matters, and played full back at football in the shield matches for his school club. He was an enthusiastic member of the Cadet Corps and never missed an opportunity of practising at the rifle range. St Paul's has long been celebrated for its boxing, and here he had a chance of showing his grit. In the December competition, 1907, he reached the bantams final, which was thus described in *The Pauline* of February, 1908: "Senior bantams final, Marks beat Hopkinson. This was one of the best bouts of the day. Hopkinson made the running to begin with and kept Marks going all the time, and there was not much between them at any point. But Marks knows rather more and is a good fighter when roused, and Hopkinson is very light." His opponent, H. G. Marks, beat him again in March, 1909, and was the victor a month later in the bantam weights in the Public School boxing competition at Aldershot.

Another red-letter day for him was January 7th, 1911, when he won the first of the annual long distance ski races for the challenge cup presented by Lord Roberts of Kandahar, open to members of the Public Schools' Winter Sports Club. The course was from the Wildstrubel Hut across a part of the Plaine Marte to the Col de Thiery, a distance of seven and a half miles as the crow flies. A full account of the race is given in *The Pauline* for February, 1911, by one of the competitors, C. N. B., from which the following is quoted: "The turn is difficult on such slopes as we descended, as for an instant one must face straight down the slope, and the pace becomes terrific. On

descending from the Col I saw the trouble had begun. Many of the party were turning superb somersaults. At my first turn I had a splendid fall, and rolled down the slope. Hopkinson was soon out of view. His turns are simply marvellous. When he has passed, one can single out his track with ease—skis close together, with scarcely a touch of the stick. It was a thrilling descent for us all. Hopkinson was an easy winner; Collins (Melbourne University) was second; Russel Clarke (Charterhouse) third; Baggally (Eton) fourth; and myself fifth. Minor disasters overtook the remaining five, one of them falling into a crevasse."

He left school for Cambridge in 1909, at an earlier age than usual. There, as he grew older and stronger, his activities became greater and wider, but this note is only concerned with his school days. He was a boy that any one might be proud to know, and would be the better for knowing; and I am both glad and proud to speak of my great admiration and affection for him.

An extremely critical master at St Paul's, who has passed away, once wrote a description of him in a school report in four different languages. Only the ending of what he wrote remains in the memory: '*O si sic omnes.*'

With an unblemished character and a creditable record Cecil left school in 1909 for Trinity College, Cambridge.

In many ways he was fully young for his years. He was still obviously growing very fast—faster than most boys of his age. His sheltered home life had not developed his *savoir faire.* Inwardly, however, he was more mature. He had thought much for himself, and had read a great deal. Ever since he had been a little schoolboy it had been his sister's habit to read some good book to him during his evening meal, after his return from school. Thus many standard works—poetry, novels, biographies of great men—had been read, and Cecil had enjoyed them quietly; his subsequent casual remarks showing how thoroughly he had absorbed some of them. He had a real love for fine literature and an intimate if limited knowledge of good writers. His tastes were decidedly catholic for this and other forms

of interest and enjoyment; but he had an instinct for what was good. Truly he obeyed St Paul's injunction: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

He had always been the centre of the home life, and after it had been in great measure devastated, those who were left tried hard to make up to him for what he had lost. The consequence was that, in some directions, his life had been very rich. His home was spacious and comfortable, finely situated on Wimbledon Common and surrounded by a beautiful large garden. He had had many indulgences and special scope for outdoor pleasures of unusual character. His holidays, in particular, had often been of rare interest and delight. Many he had spent with German friends in the Austrian Tyrol, hunting stag and chamois, and obtaining real insight into German home life and customs, as well as knowledge of the language. Thus, in certain directions, his education and development were in advance of his fellows'.

Perhaps because he knew he was comparatively ignorant of the ways of the world, perhaps because his was a naturally modest disposition, perhaps because of his somewhat fussy upbringing, he still retained his self-protecting reserve and, for the same reason, was apt to copy the manners of those in whose company he found himself. So strangers who were not in sympathy with him (he was quick to find this out unconsciously) could have no idea of his ever growing charm, for he was quite unable to place his goods in the shop window. His reticence increased during his first year at Cambridge and it seemed indecorous to try to break through it. Afterwards, good friendships, increasing confidence in his own powers and the general joy of successful,

healthy college life told on him and he grew to be, for those who cared for him, the most delightful companion imaginable. He retained his simplicity and modesty. He developed his joy in life, his wide, sympathetic perceptions, his unselfishness, his fun. He had always had a sense of humour and an appreciation of funny stories most gratifying to the teller. But now, in addition, he was able to tell his own stories with great effect, entirely overcoming his inability to express himself. He freely used the slang of his age; but his knowledge of good literature often gave to his language a certain pretty distinction, while the scientific trend of his mind kept it simple and accurate. In addition, with his enormous, untrained voice, he sang comic songs to the delight of his audience, for there was a histrionic strain in his composition which, to many, quite made up for the lack of musical rendering. Yet, of good music, as of other good things, he had an instinctive appreciation. He was no longer the grave, courteous, self-contained little boy, but a sturdy, merry young man, the life and soul of many a party, with a keen appreciation of ordinary pleasures, sometimes, perhaps, at the expense of austerer, possibly better, things. But his wholesome tastes and strenuous life were sufficient reply to criticism. For it was not that he cared less than before for science and kindred loves, but that he had come to like other things more—society, including that of women for whom, hitherto, he had had only a somewhat detached respect; all manner of excursions, especially those that involved sailing, in which he excelled; clothes, though his interest in these was spasmodic; and so forth.

He claimed the full right of youth to have a good time. And he had it, to the comfort of those who now mourn for him. His obvious determination to enjoy himself may have deceived some who could not detect his greater but carefully concealed and partly unconscious allegiance to honour-

able work and duty. He was indeed one of those "Glad hearts, without reproach or blot, Who do Thy work and know it not."

It has been said that his home life made him casual, a peculiarity which some of his friends, with different training, seem to have shared very fully. They were, for the most part, wonderfully happy-go-lucky young men, yet, to the surprise of their elders, they seldom failed to accomplish what they set out to do, and only occasionally inconvenienced other people by their jolly carelessness.

He kept, to a great extent, his love of peace and quiet, and enjoyed visiting his sister, after her marriage, in her beautiful little country home. It appealed to his sense of fitness when her husband received the K.C.B., and to his sense of humour that she, of all people, should have such reflected glory. She talked very freely with him. His wide, charitable outlook, his strangely mature judgment on some points, his truth, his reticence—all contributed to invite her confidence. He liked it, especially when recalling the barriers which his health as well as difference of age had put between them when he was a little boy. They exchanged plenty of chaff and opinions on all manner of subjects. He no longer kept his views to himself but expressed them very forcibly indeed. He was a capital opponent in an argument, able to appreciate the other side of the question, while keeping to his own opinions. These were eminently sound and wholesome. Perhaps, as with most happy young folk, there was a certain lovable arrogance in his belief in ideas, whether his own or another's, which had been reached first-hand, by individual effort; to think for oneself meant much to him. It was not till the war had taught some of its lessons that he seemed to realize the possible limits to human understanding and mental vision. Again, like many happy young men, whose present is filled with all manner of good material things and with

preparation for more good things to come, he does not seem to have inclined much to religious thought or feeling, though he always listened with silent respect to his sister's halting words on the subject. She had read the entire Bible to him during his boyhood and he had imbibed much of it. How much, did not appear till he lay on his deathbed.

His reserve made him somewhat undemonstrative; but he had a trick of occasionally looking long and unsmilingly right into one's face, with grave blue eyes that revealed the depth of his affection. His was a nature eminently fitted for love and he secured the devotion of most who had to do with him, whatever their degree. He appreciated and deserved it. To the end of his life he was faithful to his old nurse—Kate, who became his sister's cook. When he visited her mistress, he was seldom in the house for more than a few minutes before he would go into the kitchen and embrace her, no matter who else was by, and have a little chat with her.

Going up from a large school to a university where his family name had, for many years, been one of good report, and where his brother was already a Professor, Cecil had no lack of friends or of introductions. His intimates, however, he chose for himself and from the end of his second year onward he was a member of one of those small groups whose existence gives to university life its peculiar flavour and value. From the letters of these friends and from the recollections of one or two of the seniors with whom he came into contact we can form a fairly complete picture of his Cambridge life.

The Master of the Temple, who was Cecil's college tutor, writes:

I think that I first saw Cecil Hopkinson about the middle of the year 1908. He was then at St Paul's school, and the question had arisen as to whether he should come into residence at

Trinity in the Michaelmas term of 1909, or a year later. To settle the question it was arranged that he should come to talk with me, and I still remember his visit. He was then just about seventeen years old, boyish in manner, and somewhat awkward in his movements, as boys of that age often are. He was obviously vigorous, and his fresh colour was an index of bodily health. But what impressed one most was his eagerness, a quick intellectual enthusiasm, unusual in so young a boy. He was obviously full of the interests which a parent would desire a growing schoolboy to possess. When one looked at him, he reminded one of an awkward puppy, who has not learned to combine grace of movement with increasing strength. But, as he talked, an unexpected seriousness came into his face. His words without being stilted were those of a man; there was in them a certain maturity, spontaneous not grave, a natural development and not an artificial product of school or home. He had plainly begun to feel some of the problems of life, and to think about the career he would choose for himself.

It was consequently with no hesitation that I advised that he should begin his University course in 1909, even though he would then be only eighteen years of age. He would undoubtedly have been more successful in his initial University examinations, had he remained another year at school. But fortunately it was not necessary for him to win scholarships before he could enter at Cambridge. His friends realized that, if he wished to spend four years in University studies, it would be advisable for him to enter upon these in good time, lest he should have to begin his practical training as an engineer-apprentice at the age of twenty-three, when his tastes and outlook were too "set" to allow him to profit adequately, by working side by side with skilled artisans, and unskilled labourers. Many boys would profit greatly by beginning their course at the older Universities at least a year earlier than has, during the last generations, become customary. Their intellectual interests are often stunted rather than quickened, during this last year at school. They may gain experience as house-prefects, it is true, but the value of the habit of command that is so acquired is over-rated. With the average competent man, the habits of decision will inevitably be developed by responsibility, even though in youth he has not been deputed by the house-master at a public school to exercise a brief authority, and though he may not have received in early life the reverence which the small boy offers

to the youth who shows an aptitude for the organized games of a public school. Cecil Hopkinson did not waste his nineteenth year in such a manner, and his career, brief as it was, showed conclusively that he did not suffer because of it.

He came into residence at Trinity in October, 1909, having passed the Previous Examination with ease, a year earlier. From the first he was one of those students, to use a common phrase, who "gave his tutor no trouble." He easily and naturally fell into Cambridge ways, enjoying life heartily from his comfortable rooms in King's Parade. He attended lectures regularly, and combined hard work with an enthusiasm for rowing that brought him a number of valued and valuable friends. No one who had had the least experience of young men and their initial mistakes at Cambridge could have been anxious as to his character or moral progress. He was healthy in body and mind, honest, direct both in spirit and outlook. His mental prowess developed slowly. He read for Part I of the Mathematical Tripos, and at first his progress was apparently so slow that I feared that he would only be placed in the third class. But his steady perseverance, and the sympathetic teaching which he received from Mr Nicholson, now Professor at King's College, London, with whom he "coached," soon dispelled my fears. And though at the end of his first year, he was placed in the second class in the tripos I knew enough of his qualities to be sure that before he reached his degree he would be recognized as a man of first class abilities.

As soon as the mathematical tripos lists were published, he began to work at Mechanical Sciences, for that purpose coming into residence in the Long Vacation of 1910.

In the Autumn Term of 1910 Hopkinson began the normal course of preparation for the Mechanical Sciences Tripos. Abstract Mathematics had never been quite congenial to him; his mind was always attracted by concrete problems and studies, and he showed at once that he had inherited no small share of his father's practical genius. His lectures presented no especial difficulties to him; he had no need to requisition the services of a private tutor, and he felt in himself so sure that he could keep level with the best men of his year that he regularly spent long afternoons on the river. Of his success there others must speak; I believe he was a good, but not brilliant oar; his physical growth was not indeed ended when he left Cambridge, and he had not the lithe grace and firm-set poise which one associates

with great oarsmen. Rowing was for him a form of healthy amusement, and success on the river was never the main object of his ambition. He enjoyed the sport; and, freshened by exercise, he could apply his mind with renewed vigour to his studies. In March, 1911, he was awarded an exhibition, on the results of the College Examination, and the examiners' judgment was confirmed when three months later he was placed in the first class in the Intercollegiate Examination in Mechanical Sciences. During his third year his progress was steady; I personally was surprised that his Exhibition was not exchanged for the higher honour of a Senior Scholarship. But one was well aware that in all examinations chance plays too prominent a part in determining the result, and any disappointment was neutralised in the fact that in June, 1912, he took his degree with first class honours in the Mechanical Sciences Tripos.

Hopkinson then determined to spend a fourth year in Cambridge in order that he might at least gain an insight into the conditions under which research work is done. As soon as he had taken his degree, he and his friend, Mr W. L. Bragg, came to me, and asked to be allowed during their fourth year to share a large and delightful set of rooms in the Great Court. Both men were pupils of mine; each possessed exceptional ability, to each I pointed out that their request was one which I had never previously allowed, and that the plan would almost certainly end in disaster, since each would interrupt the studies of the other. Having thus satisfied my conscience, and shelved my responsibility, I saw the plan work out, as I had expected, most successfully. The two men stimulated one another; their joint rooms were a centre of eager discussion, and healthy fun; and probably both enjoyed the year, when for the first time in their University career they could work without the burden of a forthcoming examination, more than they had dared to hope.

At the end of the Easter Term of 1913 Cecil Hopkinson resolved to leave Cambridge that he might begin practical work with Messrs Parsons at Newcastle. I suggested to him that he might stay on in Cambridge with the idea of competing for a Fellowship, but he negatived the plan. He rightly felt that he had come to a parting of the ways, and he definitely resolved to seek a career which, had he been spared, might have given to the industry and commerce of the country one of its great leaders. I saw him from time to time after he had begun his apprenticeship at Newcastle. He spoke with humorous enjoyment of

getting to work at 6 a.m., clad in the blue overalls of an artisan and with a basket in his hand. It was evident that his quiet courtesy and unfailing kindness made it easy for him to gain the friendship of the workmen with whom he associated. He had a respect for their dourness, their shrewd common sense, and their practical ability; he was genially tolerant of their defects; and I have little doubt that, as I heard from other sources, they admired and respected his good-temper and tact.

I saw him but once after he had accepted a commission. His uniform made no difference to his outlook on life. He showed a genial amused tolerance for the militarism of some of the elderly civilians around him. He plainly regarded the war as a senseless disgrace to European civilisation, in which it was his duty to help his country. But he spoke little of himself, and said nothing of the way in which his life's plans had been disarranged; of the men in his especial charge he spoke with enthusiasm. His apprenticeship at Newcastle had shown him how to get the best out of those who served under him. He must have been an almost ideal subaltern, patient, kindly, considerate, with innate undoubted qualities of leadership.

He was an idealist, with shrewd insight and a quick understanding of the realities of life, religious in the true sense of the word, for he had a passionate belief in the moral order of the universe. I never talked to him directly of religion; one felt that he was feeling his way to belief, that he had the *anima naturaliter Christiana*, and that in time his reverence for Christian standards would have led him definitely to the Christian Faith.

But a chance German shell left him grievously wounded, and during the year of suffering, which ended in his death, I had no opportunity of seeing him. Perhaps it is better so, for I remember him as he was in the early maturity of his powers, eager and grave by turns, alert, responsive, sympathetic, lovable, a man of whom we expected great things, whose memory many will cherish till they too pass away and, if worthy, meet him again.

No one among his contemporaries can speak of Cecil with greater authority than his friend Capt. W. L. Bragg, who writes:

I first met Cecil Hopkinson in 1910 when we were both beginning our second year at Cambridge. We knew the same friends

and saw a good deal of each other, and at the end of the year he asked me to stay with him in Mull during the Long Vacation. There we had a fortnight together, shooting, fishing and sailing. The next summer I again stayed with him in Mull, and in winter we went to Vermala in Switzerland. In 1913 we had a week on the Broads and later I joined him in the South of Ireland for a cruise along the coast. That Christmas we went to Grimmi Alp. During our fourth year at Trinity we kept together in Great Court.

Hopkinson was absolutely the ideal companion on all these occasions. He combined a tremendous amount of initiative in planning an expedition with a level-headed practical way of scheming out ways and means, which made him a born leader. This was done quite unconsciously and above all unselfishly. He would never push himself forward to take command. His doing so came about quite naturally, because, although he always went in for the sporting thing to do, one knew he was going the right way about doing it.

He was a born explorer and loved country for its own sake. He would study maps and charts for hours at a time. When we got to any new place he would pore over the map until he satisfied himself that he knew the lie of the land completely. His maps were a library to him, a record of all the places he had been to, and in our rooms in Great Court he had a collection of them which he was always pulling out and looking over. He had a passion for charts. He used to acquire a number of these, on as large a scale as possible, of any bit of coast in which he was interested, and he has often taken me round to the University Library to look up the charts of any place to which we might be going.

One of his greatest charms, unexpected in a man so energetic and fond of adventure for its own sake, was his intense love of nature. This was rarely expressed but it was always there, and crowned the pleasure which we got from our expeditions. He liked all those things which one might have expected him to ignore. A big expanse of country, a fine view, was a really acute pleasure to him. He loved the sea. Pictures such as those by Napier Hemy always attracted him, not so much as pictures but because they reminded him of the sea.

He loved travel and big cities. He said to me once when entering Charing Cross Station that he could not bear to look at the Continental boat trains, it made him feel so rotten. The

R. E. Hopkins.

streets of London or Paris were a joy to him. If we had an hour or two to wait in London he used to insist on our boarding the first bus that passed, wherever it was going, and we only just got back in time to catch our train. One day we spent in wandering about the London Docks.

He liked talking to all sorts and conditions of people he met and always got on famously with them. A guide in Switzerland or a Scotch keeper would talk to him as to a fellow and initiate him into all the secrets of their trade.

Somehow one learnt from him the secret of the perfect enjoyment of a holiday. He lived in the moment and he scorned to bother about details that didn't matter.

During our last two years at Cambridge some of us had a weekly meeting in each others' rooms. Every Sunday evening during term a paper was read. Though the proceedings always started off in the most orderly manner, the paper was rarely finished. It inevitably happened that the argument quickly became general and that the author, after vainly endeavouring in the quieter moments to carry on, was forced to join in. Hopkinson was as keen as any in these discussions. Somehow one did not expect, in one so essentially practical, an interest in the vague generalities in which the argument always centred. It arose from his intense desire to get at the root idea of everything. He always thought in a big way, was all for the essentials and not for the details.

A new idea, an invention, a scientific discovery was always sure of commanding his interest, even when made in some branch of science widely remote from his own. It was the idea which appealed to him, the train of thought which had led to the solution of the problem. After talking it over for a bit, he would retire with it to a corner of the room, and from a series of exclamations of "By Jove!" at long intervals one would know that he was pinning down the various points one by one. His enthusiasm for such things had no bounds.

He had a terrific scorn for anyone who bothered about things that really didn't matter, and he certainly was never guilty of this himself. This led sometimes to the most curious results. He was the most happy-go-lucky man with his personal possessions I have ever met. I shall always remember an occasion when we kept together. In the morning his sister descended on him and commandeered for a rummage sale all those clothes of his which she declared were no longer fit to wear. Later on

the same day his sister-in-law came to recover the numerous garments which he had borrowed from his brother, and I can hear now the shouts of laughter which greeted the discovery that he was left with practically nothing but the things he was wearing. Another incident I remember is Hopkinson emerging from his bedroom saying, "I say, this is ridiculous. I've got seventeen socks and not one of them a pair." Once I helped him pack for Switzerland. He had forgotten to do this until the porter came to tell him that the hansom to take him to the station was waiting at the door. I trod round in the bag while he fed in clothes at the side. I recall with pride that we remembered everything except his boots. And yet he loved his possessions such as his guns and his boat, his ski and his climbing boots. It was just that he was never their servant, always their master.

That which we remember in the Hopkinson we knew was the width and strength of his character. On the one hand, he had the practical ability and power of attending to detail. On the other, he had the breadth of outlook, the love of the ideal. It was not so much that he excelled on either side, though he had that which is more important than quickness, the power of concentrating on anything new until he had grasped the idea. But he was thoroughly in sympathy with, and understood, one side as well as the other. In addition to this, he had unlimited energy and a zest for life and work which fired all who came into contact with him with something of his own enthusiasm. It is easy to understand how his men must have looked up to him at the front. It is possible to make some poor estimate of the loss which his country has suffered in his death.

Another of his friends, Lieut. H. Townshend, says of him:

As you know, we came together at Trinity in our first term, and we did a good many things together.

I think his College friends always associate with him a sort of quiet energy, an interest in almost everything, and his own special kind of cheeriness, which was with him even when I saw him last. Also, we like to remember that (I think more than anyone I knew) he enjoyed every day of his life at Cambridge.

We may quote again from Captain W. B. Carslake, a friend of his early youth:

During the latter part of his time at St Paul's and his first two years at Cambridge I rarely saw Cecil, but when we were

both in residence together I found him exactly as of old, only with those qualities which I had looked up to and admired in him as a boy still more developed. His old keenness for all outdoor sports and thoroughness in everything he undertook were just the same; and though different colleges and different work prevented our becoming really intimate, I well remember his telling me, amongst other things, of his eagerness to deal with men; and surely his ability in this was amply proved by his too brief military career.

Indeed, I think it was this power of leadership in him, together with his thoroughness and straightforwardness, which chiefly appealed to me and always inspired such confidence. Perhaps these qualities were nowhere brought more into prominence, until the war gave them their fullest scope, than when yachting.

In the summer of 1913, I was one of the crew who sailed with him and his brother in the *Chough* down the Channel, and then over to the South and South-West Coast of Ireland. Cecil was an expert yachtsman, and his energy on board was inexhaustible; he was always at some job, splicing a rope, tinkering at the motor which never would run satisfactorily or, one fine spell, rigging up a wireless-receiving apparatus, and was quite the life and soul of the party. He undertook for himself the duties of cook, and on several occasions, when it was rough, performed wonders in the forecastle, rushing on deck now and then for a breath of air in the middle of preparing a meal, lest, as he said, by trying to stay below too long, he should spoil it all! When hove-to one specially stormy night he stayed on deck till the early morning, though not then on watch, preparing a sea anchor, which fortunately we did not have to use; and when it came to piloting the boat into a difficult harbour, I for one always trusted implicitly in his judgment. Fearless, but not reckless, self-confident, and so inspiring confidence in others, he was a friend and comrade, who can never be replaced.

The following letter from Mr C. G. Lamb, of the Engineering Laboratory, gives still another view of Cecil:

I first met R. C. Hopkinson in the long vacation of 1910, when he started his work at the Engineering Laboratory by taking the special courses of lectures then being given, before he began his regular course in his second year. During the rest

of his time at Cambridge we met almost solely during his working hours at the Laboratory, in connection with the course of Lectures on Electrical Engineering for which I was responsible.

My intercourse with him was therefore practically confined to such occasions and was of necessity restricted to the narrow circle of the special work concerned. I was much struck by his exceptional receptiveness and his aptitude for experimental work, but most of all by his possession of the somewhat rare faculty of very quickly appreciating the general principles of the subject he was studying, and of readily and surely applying them to special problems without effort, and he was always suggestive and interesting in such discussions as arose. My impression was that the full measure of his abilities would not be realized till considerably later than is usual, but that he was bound to go far as time went on.

For some time I saw but little of him, as indeed is unfortunately the case with so many of one's pupils, and, with the exception of a few flying visits to the Laboratory, we scarcely met again until his return to Cambridge during his first convalescence from his wound. We then saw one another more frequently, and the topics of conversation were naturally far more diverse and extended than when I had met him as a student in the Laboratory. We traversed all sorts of subjects, and I was greatly struck with the catholicity of his range of interest and his breadth of view, whether in literature, music, social questions, or general scientific subjects. In spite of the disability produced by his injury, he was always full of humour and good spirits, never depressed and always patient. He was full of plans for the future, not only as concerned himself and those who had worked with him, but also for the Laboratory and the students attending it. My last visit ended, as was usual, with some music, and it is somewhat singular that the last thing I played to him was the slow movement of Beethoven's Sonata, op. 26.

He was looking so well and was so normal and bright that I went away feeling the worst corner was turned and that one might regard the future with real hopefulness. Then came the sudden and fatal relapse which took from us one who not only would most certainly have made a name for himself in the world, but one whose personality and gifts would have been of the greatest service to his country in the crisis through which it is now passing.

Cecil left Cambridge for Sir Charles Parsons' Engineering Works, Newcastle, in 1913. The letters just quoted show what an honourable career he had had at the University. He had fulfilled the promise which he had shown when he left St Paul's School, and there seemed to be still better things to come. Those who cared for him had high hopes that a life of great attainment lay before him. Well, perhaps their hopes were fulfilled.

According to custom Cecil, as an apprentice, was rated as an ordinary workman and was treated as such at Newcastle —a great contrast to his academic life. He keenly relished the reality of it all. His fellow-workmen seem to have been very friendly, and probably soon perceived that he was of the right stuff, grateful to learn from their superior skill and ready to discuss any question as between man and man.

He saw, to some extent at any rate, both sides of the question between employer and employed, though his sympathies leant at first towards the side of the workmen. He realized the monotony of their toil, especially for minds as keen as his own though developed on different lines. Later he was affected by their capricious attitude and the immense difficulties which they created as well as overcame. But it is impossible to do justice to his views on these great questions, expressed as they were in casual conversation and, as yet, not fully formed. Enough that they gave the impression of wide, discriminating judgment and ever deepening thought.

When the war broke out he was visiting his sister on a short holiday, greatly enjoying the elegancies of gentle life after the rough, ugly surroundings of Newcastle. Like other peaceable young men he must needs join the fray at once and tried to become a despatch rider, thinking that his knowledge of German and his possession of a motor bicycle would be useful in this dangerous employment. His appli-

cation, however, did not succeed (in consequence, perhaps, of his elder brother's timely interference) and he applied instead for a commission in the Royal Engineers. Then followed three weeks of waiting. What joy when his name appeared among the signal officers of that Corps!

Cecil was now over six feet tall, very well proportioned, with great, toil-worn hands and a finely shaped head. His forehead, scored with lines of thought, was straight and strong like a cliff. His eyes, well placed, were deep set and dark blue, very beautiful in expression, as well as in shape and colour. His nose, mouth and chin all indicated strength of character. It was a thin, very keen face, honest and humorous in expression, with the stamp of hardy health on it. He had certain abrupt little mannerisms when he was shy, and was absent-minded and inert if he were bored.

Each fresh experience seemed to enrich his nature. His sister, who was in somewhat delicate health at this time, was astonished at his affectionate little cares of her—he who had been as thoughtless and ignorant of others' health as he was of his own.

His military training was hard, varied and interesting. His letters show how he enjoyed it. He was still very light-hearted; but his views on the war were sober and more thoughtful than those of many of his elders.

How his work, at this time, appeared to others may be learnt from the following letter from Captain Hebbert, his senior officer in his Signal Company.

"I first met "Hoppy," as we always called him, at the Signal School at Aldershot about November, 1914. He of course had joined up directly there was any question of officers being required. As a matter of fact he was, I think, second on the list of temporary commissions in the R.E. so had indeed lost little time. We got to know each other just at the end of our course at the Signal School, when he was posted to the same company as I was going to. We then discussed the future training of the

company, and I realized that everything would be done while I remained a bit longer at Aldershot. As Senior Subaltern Hoppy would be mainly responsible for the training, and I saw that not only had he an exceptionally good head for organisation, but that he was extraordinarily keen on his work; and when he left for the company at Shorncliffe I felt happy as to its future. When I arrived, about a month later, I found that I was absolutely right in my expectations. Training was proceeding on well organised lines; in fact, there was little if anything that could be improved on.

The days were very full at Shorncliffe, and when the weather or some other unavoidable circumstances prevented Signal training we used to go out on route marches. I remember being mystified as to why the company marched so much better on some days than on others, and at last finding, much to our amusement, that the bad days were when Hoppy, with his long legs, was leading.

Life was full as I said, and we had little time for such amusements as theatres and so on in the evenings, but one thing we always managed was a game of football on Saturdays. The company, strangely enough, was much keener on Rugby football than on Soccer, and we had many good games. Hoppy nearly always played. He was not an extraordinarily brilliant player, but what he lacked in skill he made up for in dash. Altogether we had a very successful football season, winning or drawing all, except one which, as far as I can remember, was against the officers of the 12th Division Gunners.

About the middle of January we heard that, in order to make room at Shorncliffe for another field company, the Signal Company would have to be billeted at Folkestone. This sounds very nice on paper, but it must be remembered that in those days we were very keen on training, and Folkestone even from a distance was not good for war, while Folkestone from within would have been, to say the least of it, impossible. So it was arranged that Hoppy and I should scour the country for a suitable billeting locality, which we proceeded to do. My motorbike being in dock, or "dis" as we say in signals, I went in Hoppy's side-car. I should have mentioned this famous machine before. It certainly was a good bike, but it was expected to do most impossible things; Hoppy, however mechanical he may have been in other things, was not kind to his bike, and the loads and weather conditions it had to overcome were stupen-

dous. Like its owner, however, it managed to overcome all difficulties and somehow or other won through.

To return to the question of billets. We carefully examined the map, and one Sunday afternoon set off with a long list of villages to examine. The first on the list was a little place called Barham, and this accordingly we visited first. There everything appeared suitable. We found places for the men, places for the company office, and stables—everything in fact. In addition to this, what we saw of the inhabitants decided us that Barham was a good place. I had never till then realized that Hoppy was one who could be influenced by a pretty face, but he was quite convinced that the village would suit us, long before I had made up my mind. The Army does not always work quickly, but in this case it did. Within two days we were billeted there and within four we were installed.

After we had settled down, we found that we were extraordinarily comfortable. Each morning the company had physical training at about 7 a.m., and some of the officers usually went for a ride. Hoppy was an energetic lover of the early morning ride. He was not a very expert horseman, but he was keen, and had no hesitation in attempting a brook or a hedge. In fact he had plenty of pluck on a horse, and this quality usually made up for his lack of skill. Here also we had a good deal of football. One game in particular I remember, when we went over to Canterbury to play King's School. It was a pouring wet day, and the field was a mass of mud. We had an excellent game, however, and Hoppy made valiant efforts to gain a "try" for our side. He was, however, too top-heavy, and like the rest of us merely succeeded in getting himself covered with mud.

We had a particularly good time at Barham, including several jaunts on our motor-bikes to Canterbury and Folkestone. I remember we used to rag Hoppy about a certain rather well-known beauty in the latter town. In ragging as in work, however, he used to keep extraordinarily cool and one could never get a very good "leg pull" with him.

Soon after this we moved to Aldershot and there I was at a different Mess to Hoppy and saw very little of him. We worked together, of course; but we had by this time divided up into sections, and our sections always worked separately, so that I didn't see very much of him even in work.

We were at Aldershot for about six weeks, during which time

we went on many field-days and manœuvres together, and then we went out to France.

Cecil was sent to France with his Section in May, 1915. At first he seems to have been very happy and interested; but, after a few months, tedium and discomfort slowly asserted themselves. His letters do not reveal his great weariness. It was only after he was wounded in November, 1915, that one learnt of it by slow degrees. But he seldom spoke of it, though he was free enough in telling of his other experiences.

He evidently possessed some of the best qualities for leadership. Along with his official authority he exercised both discernment and sympathy, and in everything he was genuine and consistent. A very fine relationship existed between him and his men. He studied their individual characteristics with great care and had plenty of stories about them. He told how, on a certain occasion, he was walking above the trenches with one of his good men—of vast proportions—who was recounting some entertaining experience, when a shell burst close to them. Instinctively they jumped into the trench, the big man on the top of his officer, stopping in the middle of his sentence for the purpose, and then continuing just where he had left off.

It was the ceaseless responsibility that seems to have been so wearing to Cecil. He did not spare himself either by day or night. Towards the end he was so tired that he would fall asleep between the courses of his mess. He felt that he became too stale to do his best. Months after he had been wounded, when all hope of returning to the Front had been abandoned, it was pitiful to see him thinking hard about his work in France. He was not allowed to write and he longed to pass on his new, carefully-planned scheme to someone who could understand and use it. But no such person appeared, and he submitted to that disappointment as to

many others. We learnt, however, from various sources, how good his work had been.

Thus Captain Hebbert, in the letter already quoted, goes on:

About a fortnight after we separated at Aldershot I found Hoppy on the end of a telephone in a farm near Plug Street, as it is commonly called. From that time, I remember him as being the keenest and most capable of the three Brigade Signal Subalterns. He was always thinking of some new scheme, perfecting some new idea.

I remember, in particular, experiments of his in overhearing. He was, I think, one of the first to go seriously into the question of the Huns picking up our messages, and he worked very hard on it. His efforts were however cut short by the Division being suddenly sent to Loos. There we arrived about the 28th and the next time I saw him was in the cellar of a house in Loos. This was an unpleasant quarter, but he appeared quite happy and was, I remember, much pleased at the discovery of a German telephone. I saw really very little of him from then till the time he was hit. Whenever I heard of him he was, with his untiring energy, trying some new dodge for communications. When he was hit, he was, as usual, personally supervising the placing of an S.O.S. Visual Lamp. At the time, the wound appeared light and he seemed cheery, but it was in a bad place; and we were extraordinarily sorry to hear the reports that we received from time to time. The end was a long time coming, and we hoped that he would recover; but it was willed otherwise.

I have seldom met anyone more loved and respected by his men. Though the discipline of his section was undoubtedly slack, owing to his rather casual methods, his men would have followed him anywhere. One was always certain of obtaining sound commonsense and good judgment on putting any questions to him. He is a loss not only to his mother, but also to his fellow officers and his country.

Captain Ryan, the officer who succeeded him, writes:

Hoppy's energy was inexhaustible and broke forth at most unexpected moments. It so happened that at Ploegsteert Brigade Headquarters were in a farm, and Hoppy slept in a

room above that of the General. Regularly every morning in the small hours everyone would be awakened by the tramp of heavy boots on a wooden floor. Backwards and forwards across the room the noise would go, and investigation always showed it to be Hoppy pacing up and down, full of some idea which had seized him as he lay in bed. Whether he put his boots on unconsciously or not we could never discover, but they seemed to be necessary to the successful working out of the idea. After some time we grew used to the steady tramp, and it was only on some occasion which caused us to be awake that we knew that it still persisted.

After the first strenuous part of the Loos fighting, the Division had a well earned though short rest near Bethune. It had been a hard time for all concerned, and many arrangements which had existed in the more peaceful days at Armentières had been abandoned. A minor instance, but one which caused us much scheming and planning, occurred in the forming of a Signal Company Mess. Until this time the signal officers at Divisional H.Q. had lived in various scattered Messes, and finally we decided to combine and have a home of our own. What more fitting than the inviting of all the brigade subalterns to the first grand dinner! Never before had the brigades, while in France, been at rest together, and we looked upon this occasion as a great reunion. Hebbert and myself prepared the festive board in a cottage with a white sanded floor. Hoppy, Chrystal, and Burn arrived eager to behold this wonderful establishment. It was the first time for five months that we had been able to meet, and we remember it as one of the most pleasant evenings of the war. We knew that our rest was short, and Hoppy was full of ideas for new schemes to try in the fighting that was to come. The evening closed early, for the brigade subalterns were eager to get back to their sections, which for months they had not left, even for so short a spell. That was our last restful night until after Hoppy was wounded, and I remember even now someone saying that Hoppy's goodnight made one feel that he at least would enjoy a peaceful rest after his tramp home.

In the morning of November 24th, 1915, Cecil was, as usual, in the open, with shells breaking around him. In the evening, he was crouching in a trench, working with some of his apparatus, when the enemy shrapnel which caused his

death exploded, hitting the right side of his head. One thinks of what might have been had he worn the then uncommon helmet with which, however, many of the French troops were already supplied. He often said how thankful he was that when he was wounded he was not exposing himself needlessly, as sometimes happened. He said that the first time he felt absolutely scared was when, after his wound had received temporary dressing, he had to leave the dug-out for the open, where shells were exploding. He thought one would kill him immediately and so rob him of his chance of getting home. In his fear he rushed back again into the dug-out, hitting his head against the roof.

His wound does not seem to have caused him severe pain, and he decided to walk back to his quarters, nearly three miles away. He had seen too much to consent to be jolted on a stretcher through the labyrinth of trenches, of which his special work had given him intimate knowledge. Nevertheless, he and the man who escorted him lost their way—a misfortune which he recalled with great amusement. The end of the walk was, apparently, a terrible struggle. He was becoming weak from loss of blood, and the paralysis, which had rendered his left arm powerless immediately after the injury, began to attack his left leg as well. Some of his own men seem, at last, to have almost carried him to his quarters, where he met with much cheery sympathy from his commanding officer and others. He was conveyed to the Base Hospital where he underwent the operation of trephining, and as many as possible of the fragments of smashed bone and shrapnel were removed from the brain.

He often talked of the relief of seeing women again at the Base Hospital, no matter whether they were young or old, pretty or plain, and he also spoke with enthusiasm of the kind and gentle nursing he received. He was vexed that he had been too ill to obtain his nurse's name and address, and

was, therefore, unable to write to her afterwards. Should any of the ladies in France who nursed Lieutenant R. C. Hopkinson in November, 1915, chance to read this memoir, let them know that he never forgot their blessed ministrations.

He was rather amused and annoyed at the secrecy observed about his wound, and took the opportunity of reading about it on the label attached to the clothing during his journey to Calais, which was accomplished on the barge reserved for bad cases. He said that when the paralysis set in he was worried about it till he suddenly remembered one of the periodic meetings, in the Cambridge days, of a group of friends who met together to discuss a paper read by one of them on his own work. On that occasion the subject had been the human brain, and Cecil had then learnt that the part of the brain which controls the movements of the left side of the body is situated on the right side of the head, and that certain injuries to it cause paralysis on the left side of the body. This recollection roused his scientific interest and gave him considerable satisfaction.

After a few days at Calais, he was moved to Leicester War Hospital, where he spent about four months. Then he was taken to his mother's home in Cambridge, and there his life ended after ten months of fluctuating hopes.

On the whole he had seemed to make good progress at Leicester. The authorities warned us, however, that it was impossible to tell how things might go, a great specialist pointing out that each case of the kind was still a law to itself and that sufficient experience had not yet been collected to warrant any certain prognosis. But as time went on, belief in Cecil's recovery became stronger and stronger. The clean wholesome life he had led and his excellent constitution seemed greatly in his favour, and he came to be regarded with professional pride by doctors and nurses. He made

great friends of some of his nurses, especially one V.A.D. whose unselfish sympathy and strength appealed to him. Some months after his death she wrote: "My thoughts wander back very often to my first night duty in Leicester, and to how I was cheered each evening by your brother's delightful greeting as I passed through up to E 2.... He had the knack of making one feel so happy and his buoyant spirits gave one such a feeling of exhilaration, chasing all the tiredness of the night away.... He is remembered by me at Holy Communion as he has always been since I first knew him." And here let it be said that he turned unerringly to good women. He was very popular with every one, being considerate and unselfish and usually merry, sometimes almost to excess; but he longed to return to the Front, despite the bad time he had had there. He seemed to know that such officers as he were needed, and he wished to share again the troubles of his own men, some of whom still wrote to him. Their letters are a fine testimony to the affection and respect in which he was held.

Meanwhile, according to his wont, he made a point of enjoying as much as possible all the good things around him —leisure (a rare luxury to him) for reading and for examining beautiful pictures etc. which were specially brought for him to see, observation of the novel sort of life which surrounded him, scientific interest in his own condition and that of his fellow patients, conversation with all and sundry, and, above all, the making of new friends and the visits of old ones. He had an avid desire for them and it was gratified as much as possible. His mother took up her residence near the hospital, and others who loved him visited him frequently, not counting the cost of time and convenience, and feeling more than rewarded by his joy and gratitude. He had become very demonstrative and showed a pathetic need of love and friendship. I shall never forget

my last visit to him before he left Leicester. I travelled from London for the express purpose of having tea with him. Had my journey been twice as long and the time with him half as short, it would have been well worth while. His room was empty when I arrived, and he entered it a few minutes later, wearing his khaki, limping, and partly supported (only morally he said) by a nurse. But that he should have so far recovered seemed little short of miraculous. We had tea together and much bright, interesting talk; I remembered afterwards, however, that he seemed to need periods of absolute silence, as if he could not bear much mental strain. And when I said "goodbye" and received the lovely assurance that the visit had been "great," I noticed a strangely delicate look on his happy face.

Soon after his arrival in Cambridge he had an entirely unexpected, terrible relapse. What followed afterwards is set forth sufficiently in other pages of this book. A few disjointed facts and comments are all that need be added here.

On the threshold of his young manhood, when life was most vivid and eager, Cecil was struck down with a deadly ill, through no fault or folly of his own. For over a year he was prone on his bed, almost helpless, often suffering severe pain, abandoning one by one his honest earthly hopes and plans, and with no better prospect than invalidism. He had to use his active young brain as little as possible, and was not allowed to read. For some months the poison in the head affected his optic nerves, and he could hardly see or bear the light. He, who had never known headache, suffered from it continuously. At first he resisted as much as possible the administration of drugs for the alleviation of his pain, for he had observed the evil effects of them on other wounded men. Later, his determination against them weakened; but though they may have sometimes dimmed his intellect, they

could not abase his spirit, which rose from height to height of heroism as his trials grew.

They were the wonder and glory of his life—these last few months of bedridden, helpless suffering. He bore it all with undeviating courage and selflessness, cheerful whenever possible, and, when that could not be, utterly patient. What was best in him grew to the exclusion of all else. His face sometimes reminded one of the old pictures of Christ.

Frequently he said memorable things. Of some I made notes at the time, and now record them as accurately as I can. One day, after an attack of meningitis in July, 1916, when he was not expected to survive more than a few weeks, he spoke to me of my little boy, and of the importance of letting him know in time about difficulties that would be encountered at the age of seventeen or eighteen. He said a boy's imagination was apt to become very prolific then and that he ought to be told of facts by someone who could put them in a scientific way. He added that, if he had himself met with temptation then, he might have gone astray, and that "would have done for him."

Later, after he had made an extraordinary rally from what seemed his fatal illness, he told me that his recent experience had proved the insufficiency of his ethical code, and had aroused in him a sense of the need, new to him, for more definite religion. He said he would like to have a talk with one who was both a good theologian and a good Christian.

Of this conversation I wrote: "He laughed a good deal about the popular picture of a woman with one arm round a cross, while with the other, she helps a person struggling in the waves that beat upon the rock on which the cross stands; but, he said, the sentiment of one helping another to Christianity appealed to him now, and he desired to talk with Aunt Mary who was like that. He said his 'Nannie,' as he called his nurse, who took loving care of him after his

first relapse in Cambridge, and stayed with him till the end, had tried to help him thus. But neither she nor I were theologians enough, since he wanted intellectual as well as emotional acceptance of religious truth. He spoke of some of his bad experiences with so-called Christians, and of his hatred of the self-righteousness and hypocrisy which is abroad. But he admitted that all the sin committed in the name of Christianity does not affect the real thing, or the fact that Christ's example and precepts were good and beautiful. He remarked that Christ must have had wonderful mental powers to have originated such ideas. I said that no one who was not wonderfully good as well could have originated them. Then we agreed that if He was so able and so good, He would not tell a lie. Therefore He was speaking the truth when He made His great assertions about Himself. This cleared up matters somewhat, and laid a foundation of sorts."

I saw him a few weeks later, when he seemed to be continuing his painful progress to recovery and was, as usual, heroically cheerful. We were talking about *The Life and Death of Jason*, which his "Nannie" was reading to him, when he stopped short in the conversation and said abruptly: "I have done plenty of thinking lately. I have had lots of time." I looked at him enquiringly. He said he had been through "some rotten times," but that he was getting clear of them; he was certain of that. I advised him not to be too sure. He acquiesced. Then he looked me full in the face and said: "Sometimes I am able to realize clearly that it is all for the best lying here like a useless log, unable to do anything, and I can submit willingly and am content. And is not that saying with absolute sincerity 'Thy Will be done'?" he asked, with a ring of triumph in his voice. I agreed, and remarked that it must be a glorious experience when it happened. He said it was; but it did not happen

often yet. I told him that I thought it was a great thing to "stick it" as he was doing. He replied laughingly that it was a case of *nolens volens*. I assented; but pointed out that there were two ways of doing it and that his was the good way. I tried to tell him how he was helping to nobler things each one of us who had access to him; but I do not think he noticed what I said about that.

Another sudden, and this time final, relapse occurred about a month later. He was very weak when I saw him in his dim firelit room. I sat by him in silence till he asked, in his tired far-away voice, if I were there. Then he asked if I had read *The Conversion of St Wilfrid* by Rudyard Kipling. I had not. He said he would like both me and Aunt Mary to know it. At his request I started reading it aloud at once: but I soon perceived that he was too exhausted to listen and I slipped away to finish it to myself. A day or two later, when he seemed slightly better, he asked me what I thought of the story. I said I thought it was splendid and sturdy. He repeated he would like Aunt Mary to read it too. I could see there was something on his mind about religion which he wished to tell me; but I had not the courage to risk for him the fatigue which such a talk might involve. He said I must ask "Nannie" to show me which were his favourite lines in *The Conversion of St Wilfrid*, and I think those were his last words to me. The lines are: "A faith which takes care that every man shall keep faith, even though he may save his soul by breaking faith, is the faith for a man to believe in." What did he mean? I cannot tell, as I dared not enquire of him. But I am almost sure he had found his faith independently of us and was satisfied. And he wanted me to know. He lived but a few days longer, dying on February 9th, 1917, aged 25½ years.

It may be asked what need for so much writing about a life which never reached its maturity, which had nothing

conspicuous in it, and attained no formal recognition or distinction. There are hundreds of such lives being squandered daily now. That is true. But they who know, claim a place for Cecil among that band of heroic and saintly spirits whose memories and influence are among the most precious possessions of the Empire. Therefore this book may be justified as showing, however feebly, a representative of that type which is to help us and our children. At any rate, it may keep alive his presence in the hearts of those who loved Cecil.

September 1917.

Two tributes to Cecil's heroic spirit may well be placed here. The first is from Lieut. Ewing, whose recollections of earlier days have already been given.

It was during his final illness at Cambridge that we saw him as he really was—his inner thoughts and ideals exposed: his affection for his men—his longing to be with them once more—his fears that the war would end before he was able to put to the test his signalling invention—the fortitude with which he bore his suffering—the interest he took in his own symptoms and their meaning—his cheery laugh as he recalled some joke of bygone days—all these stand forth vividly from the background full of thoughts and memories of a cherished friendship.

In happier days he had undertaken the responsibilities of godfather to my small boy; his vows were destined never to be fulfilled. It is enough for me to hope that Cecil's absolute integrity, his natural enthusiasm, his complete absence of "side," and the true manliness of his character may reappear in his godchild.

The other is from Miss C. M. Parker, his devoted nurse and companion during the long, trying months at Cambridge.

I nursed Lieutenant Hopkinson for ten months, and I shall always consider it the greatest privilege that I was able to do so, and shall look back on this as one of the most happy years of my life. He was no ordinary boy. Being together day after day for so long we naturally became quite intimate friends, and talked about and discussed nearly every subject of interest; he was so broad-minded, and had such a wide outlook on life, that to look back on his illness always brings beautiful thoughts, nothing sordid or sad.

What struck me most, during that time, was his extraordinary influence for good on every one who came in contact with him; he was beloved by all, and yet it did not spoil him; he leaves behind a memory which will live, and will help the lives of those who had the good fortune to know him. Through

all those long months of illness and helplessness, he was partially paralysed and had intermittent phases of acute headaches, but I never heard a complaint or murmur: there was nothing but cheery talk and joyous laughter, and that sunny smile and disposition, which all who knew him loved so much.

He remarked one day, quoting Kipling, "I am afraid I may get like a native of Bengal who dreads pain as much as some men dread sin," but there was no fear of that; there never was, I am sure, any one more plucky than he was. He was very fond of argument and chaff. Work was the biggest factor of his life, he loved to talk of his work, of his college life and of his engineering life at Newcastle, the memories of which were such a joy to him, and he longed to get well quickly so that he could join his brother in his work at Orford Ness. What plans he made, so full of hope, vigour and life! and it was his thoughts of the past and his hopes for the future that gave him strength in his fifteen months of suffering. He said to me once: "If I am never able to do anything again I have had a gloriously happy life."

His great ideal was that every one should be given a wholesome, healthy, outdoor life, because he said "I realize how much it has helped me." He thought sailing and rowing splendid pastimes for a boy and said they ought to be part of his education, if possible; he was impressed by a little poem written by Lieutenant St Clair Tisdall, V.C., called *The Rowers*, and often asked me to read it to him. Music and reading were his great delight, he never tired of either. Mozart and Chopin were his favourite composers, and Kipling decidedly his favourite author. We read all Kipling's works to him over and over again; he never tired of them; he said they were inspiring and manly and very much to the point; he also loved poetry of every description, especially at night when he could not sleep. Many and many a night I read him to sleep with poetry; *Paradise Lost* was a great favourite, as also were Scott's poems.

He had taken intense interest and infinite pains in the training of his section, and had in every way proved himself a splendid officer, much beloved and looked up to by his men. He told me that what he most loved in France was to go and sit with his men in any spare time and discuss engineering, some of them being very experienced engineers; thus he became not only their officer but their comrade. One man, a sergeant in his company, with a few days leave from the front, came from London to Cambridge to see him. Only a short visit was

allowed, and when I said I was sorry it could not be longer, the sergeant replied: "Nurse, it is worth the journey if only to see him for five minutes, there are very few officers like him; I don't mind owning there were a good many tears shed the day he was wounded: not that we have anything to say against the officers we have now, but there is a difference." He thoroughly understood his men, and was keenly interested, not only in their work but in their home lives; he studied their characters and so got the best out of each of them. He used to say "Life would be so much easier if we always looked at the best side of people's characters," and this he certainly did himself; he was so utterly unselfish, never for one moment thinking of himself: this was specially noticed during his long illness—other people's comfort always came first.

He loved nature and all the beautiful things of life, and had such a wonderful gift of expressing himself, that his conversation was extraordinarily interesting and alive.

It is useless to attempt to give an impression of his beautiful character and vigorous mind, so full of youth and life. I can but say that those long months I was with him have left a memory with me which I shall always cherish. His utter unselfishness, his strong sense of duty and his untiring patience will be a lasting example—

"In rest, in peace, his labour nobly done."

CECIL

BY HIS MOTHER

"Good business!" called out his eldest brother, seventeen years older, at the hour when the family were assembled at dinner—all gaily toasting the new-born little chap, Rudolf Cecil Hopkinson; and the shout of joy penetrated to the mother's and the small brother's room upstairs.

On this wave of welcome, ever growing, the little boy was carried along happily during the first seven years of his life: the heart of the family, as it were; "our little anchor," as some called him, amongst the mobile brothers and sisters. He was treasured all the more because for a period he needed special care and attention by reason of some delicacy, which passed away as he grew older. He was greatly helped, indeed cured of asthma, by the active outdoor life afforded to him continually. He was an attractive child, with a spiritual little face, the bluest eyes, and masses of clustering fair hair, and always, as his father said, "Such a good little chap."

He went everywhere with the family on the adventurous family holidays. It was unthinkable to leave him at home. The first Swiss holiday, when he was three years old, stands out as a very special event. A guide carried him over the low passes on the mountains to the two or three places of different sojourn, Engelberg, Engstlen Alp, and across to Rosenlaui. A quaint sight he was, his little figure comfortably tucked on the shelf of a wooden carrier attached to the guide's back; his nurse walking by his side with an umbrella sheltering him from the sun; Cecil obviously enjoying the lovely scene, the birds, animals and flowers, and greatly benefiting by the high Alpine air, dropping asleep occasionally, the fair

little head pillowed against the man. Such a bonny little boy he looked; and the family followed, he leading on. More than ever he was the heart of the family, so sunny and sporting too, with a tiny ice axe and wee nailed boots. There was great excitement one day when these were not to be found; they had been tucked away, in the cleaning, at the end of his father's vast boots, and were found only when his father tried to get into the boots and felt the obstruction! The little ice axe was often used to "peck holes," as he said, in the safe low-flowing glacier of the valley, for his dear nurse Kate to place her feet in. He always looked after and cared for all around him throughout his beautiful life.

Another Swiss visit followed next year; but by this time he was promoted to a mule, perched high up on a big cushion on the saddle. Thus he travelled up to Zinal in the Rhone Valley and then across to Belalp. So the years passed. Then followed seaside and sailing holidays. One holiday was spent at Ballachulish and Banavie; another at Aberglaslyn Hall on the slopes of Moel Hebog near Beddgelert; and later another at Goodwick, South Wales, where a large sailing boat afforded much sport and amusement; Cecil taking an ever larger part in the joyous family life.

At Holmwood, Wimbledon, in the large garden and with many outside interests, he spent happy years. At first, with a band of brothers and sisters, he was nearly always out of doors, walking on the Common or playing in the garden, trotting proudly round evening and morning, holding the hand of the big school-girl sister, feeding the poultry, or visiting, with her, the horses and dogs in the stables.

In his early years, from about four to eight, he was educated at home, with five or six little neighbours gathered together, boys and girls in a happy, literally "Kindergarten" class. In the summer, the school-table was put out under the big cedar tree, and each one had a little garden of their own to

look after. The beginnings of knowledge were instilled in the best way by Miss James, the sympathetic teacher, and bore good fruit later in the satisfactory places taken by the children in their preparatory schools. In the afternoon came gay lessons in French, and French games about the garden, with an excellent French governess—a language given at play.

One event in these happy sunny years stands out. When he was about six and a half years old there came an urgent petition from Cecil to his father to let him have a bicycle. After careful measurements, he was gravely told this would be forthcoming when he could read and when his leg had grown an inch, it being thought that this was the measurement of the smallest bicycle obtainable. Very shortly after this, he crept up to his father and said, with a kind of gulp, "Father, I can read properly, but I don't think I have grown an inch," but great joy! on this, the smallest conceivable bicycle was discovered, given to the boy, and very quickly mastered—in one or two mornings during the half-hour intervals which the Kindergarten class spent in the garden. It was amusing to watch the little cycle on the lawn, the proud owner mounting continually, and as rapidly falling off, the cycle generally crashing down on top of him, to the great terror of his special little chum, Frances, who, with an anxious "poor little Cecil," helped him up again and again in obvious fear of broken bones at least. But not a bit of it: almost directly he flew round the garden on the machine, not pausing a moment, till he attained complete control; and next morning the little son rode gaily through the gate on to the Common by the side of his father who towered above him on his taller cycle, Cecil's fair hair flying out, his blue-ribboned hat down on his back, while he pedalled for all he was worth. A very proud couple they were that sunny day.

Later, when all this glory departed, when Cecil was seven,

he was found one day, stroking his little bicycle in the shed, sobbing bitterly.

Life seemed impossible then for those left to care for him, but the boy knew, by some wonderful divine intuition, that it *must* go on. One awful day, when to those travelling home in the train life's continuity seemed well nigh ended by unutterable tragedy, there came out of the darkness, from a small figure sitting close by, a little hand with a message written on a sheet of paper, torn from a note-book given to the boy. This was pressed into his mother's hand—on it was written large "Mother, Cecil," with a little masted boat drawn on top. The sheet was followed by a second, with "A mother has a Cecil," and by yet a third: "There is a mother who has a Cecil and is a dear mother."

. . . . . .

Thus life's voyage was painfully begun afresh. Later a measure of sunshine, of calm, returned to the sea of life with the little ship to guide.

Holmwood was again the centre of his boyish pursuits, happily combined with work, first at an admirable preparatory school at Mr Olive's, Rokeby, Wimbledon, then at St Paul's School. Mr Olive wrote of him as follows: "He was one of the best and most lovable boys we ever had at Rokeby; there are none of all the many old boys who have already fallen in the war for whom I grieve more."

As a small boy at home, he never lacked pursuits; there was photography, especially from a zareba made by himself in the orchard, where, by means of a pneumatic tube fixed to the camera, he could snapshot the life of the small birds around—especially of the blue-tits slipping in and out of the cocoa-nuts hung in the trees—the young photographer thus acquiring habits of ingenuity and close silent observation, unconsciously preparing for strenuous days to come. Once, when ill in bed, his great amusement was snapshoting the

birds, in and out of the cocoa-nut "tunnels," the camera placed on the balcony of his room and the convenient cocoa-nuts tied to the railing. A little later came further evidence of observation of nature, when, unaided, he fixed on the top of the house a wind vane which recorded accurately the breezes and gales of Wimbledon Common, quite a mechanical feat for a boy of about ten. When he was in quarantine after measles, a glorious solitary game was played on the billiard table, certainly not orthodox billiards. Cecil had just read Churchill's *River War*, and the story in action and attack was all carried out by him on the billiard table, during his happy convalescence. A rope laid on the green baize represented the Nile as it flows; London was scoured for every kind of tin soldier; camel corps, black regiments, nearly all the different units engaged were represented; the different zarebas and points of attack in the desert were duly set out, according to map and scale. It was amazing to see how the small boy carried it all out, to our great interest, and to his satisfaction.

Later, he taught himself to shoot with an air gun; the target, for safety, was laid on the lawn, and he shot from the balcony of his bedroom at the top of the house; really the only practical way, in view of the fact that a golfer outside the garden boundary had been nearly hit by a stray shot when Cecil tried practice on the level. Thus he always found a way out, learning much and teaching much.

Years followed of great promise in the boy, of growing power, of accomplishment, of yet greater love, influencing him towards all that is best in life.

At St Paul's School, with its Saturday to Monday off, and with its long Christmas, Easter and Midsummer holidays, he found, in addition to an excellent education, much leisure for individual development, exactly suiting his thoughtful, though joyous temperament.

At thirteen he spent his first Christmas holiday in the high Alps in Switzerland and thus early became a first-rate skier. As a result of these winter sports, the somewhat delicate lad grew up into a strong, tall, well set-up young fellow, fitted to hold his own anywhere.

Dr Cobbett wrote of this time as follows:

It was near Lengerheide, I think in the winter of 1904–1905, that I first got to know Cecil. I met him on the snow, somewhere up in the mountains, for even then (he was just 14) he was quite at home on his ski. He was at that time a delicate-looking boy, with legs rather like broomsticks swathed in putties (The Little Nipper he was called by Lillian Owen and his intimates), and he gave little promise then of the strength and size which he afterwards attained. But his spirit was the same as we knew it in later days, and he ever longed to reach the unexplored, and rejoiced undismayed at the beauties and the vigour of the mountains.

Cecil was never a showy skier, nor was he often seen competing on the practice grounds. But he could do a neat turn or a jump when he cared and had in fact more "accomplishments" than were apparent to the casual onlooker. He was at his best on difficult ground, which seldom seemed difficult to him, and many a time, when I was much younger than I am now, have I envied the way he stood up on slippery ground while the others were flopping about, or threaded his way swiftly down some steep and intricate gully in the forest. His capture of Lord Roberts' Cup has already been mentioned, but the difficult and arduous nature of the course is not so well known. It was largely the ease with which he mastered these difficulties which won him the race, and this ease was the result of his constant wanderings off the beaten track in search of adventure.

For Cecil loved to explore, to get lost and find his way back over new and unknown ground, to work his way round some mountain, behind which might lie all sorts of difficulties unforeseen. Yet he was never rash, but, on the contrary, in all emergencies a source of strength and support to the party. He was the best of companions for an adventurous expedition, ever calm, always cheerful, never selfish. I do not know whether we older ones will ever, in happier times, summon the courage again to venture on those snowy vastnesses, but I know that

if we do there will be no one of his old comrades who will not bear in his heart a deep consciousness of the loss which we have sustained.

A like picture is drawn by Mr E. Russell Clarke, who writes:

Mrs Hopkinson has asked me to write a short account of my most vivid recollections of Cecil Hopkinson. Two incidents I remember with great distinctness. In the first we were making our way out of a Cornish port, bound for Ireland, in a small auxiliary yacht. The night was inky black, and although the sea was calm, the tide was dead against us. Suddenly the boat lost way and the engine stopped. We had fouled a fishing net and wound it on the screw like a ball of wool. Cecil at once stripped and dived overboard to cut the net adrift, and I can still see his body glistening beneath the surface as he held himself under water with one hand and slashed at the net with a knife in the other hand, in the dim circle of light from a tiny hand-lamp which we lowered over the side of the yacht.

The other picture of Cecil has a background of snow. Surely he was the ideal skier! One trip I remember specially because Cecil saved my life. We started from Grimmi Alp early one morning, and skied up to the ridge which overlooks Adelboden. While we were lunching on the arête of the Gsur the wind suddenly veered to the south, and the hot air from the Italian plains soon began to soften the already rather dangerous snow. We both knew that the sooner we got down the better. About half-way down there is a very steep snow slope which is always dangerous unless the snow conditions are good. Cecil went first and shot down it at a terrific pace leaving a single perfectly straight track. I got about half-way down when the whole slope gave way. At the bottom my whereabouts were marked by a ski-point projecting from the snow. But Cecil came back and dug me out very bruised and winded, and perhaps not quite in sympathy with his shouts of laughter while he was searching in the snow for my boots.

The last deeply imprinted memory shows him on his sick bed with bandaged head, obviously in great pain but always cheerful and always interested. That picture, at once the bravest and the saddest, will never fade. He combined extraordinary physical endurance with a great mind and a great soul, and no one who knew him well could ever forget him.

Occasional Easter and Midsummer holidays were spent on the Surrey hills at Ewhurst Mill, which, perched high above Surrey woodlands and common, was adapted into a pleasant week-end cottage for him and his schoolboy friends. There were glorious views from the top of the lighthouse-like building, above the sails of the mill, away over the hills to the sea. There the boys could live a semi-colonial life, enjoying their morning baths out on the meadow in the sunlight, remote from everyone. During this period of his life there was boating, too, on the Thames, from Richmond to Hampton Court and up the river Wey. There were sometimes merry picnics with friends, but best of all it was, when Cecil acquired a small centre-board sailing-boat of his own. This almost led to disaster. The first day it was tried, there came a sudden squall on a calm reach of the river; the boat heeled over; his passenger, who was rowing at the time, threw herself to the other side, away from the incoming tide, and so, as he said, "saved the situation." However that may have been, the boat was righted, just in time, by his immediate and clever manipulation; but his mother never forgot the young, white, anxious face, which leant over her, and the look which told it had been a narrow escape. Later the thought of any peril was obliterated in the memory of that blessed sunny day with him on the shining river.

Then there were glorious times in the Lake district, especially one snowy Easter, spent in roaming over the hills from the house of his relatives, Mr and Mrs Anson, who were living at Keswick with their young children. In April, 1908, two brothers and a sister and Cecil started for a well-planned trip of two or three days round Windermere and over some of the mountains. They were such capable, trustworthy young folk, the youngest only ten-and-a-half years old, that those at home, though anxiously watching the driving snow-

storms, knew they would be all right; and they returned with thrilling stories of their adventures and not least of their housing in well-known cottages, where the small girl of the party mothered the boys.

Later, there were family Easter holidays in the same district, with the same joyous life; and visits to the Yorkshire wolds and dales with his good friend Willy Bragg. And there was a summer holiday in the Isle of Arran, and two at Bull Bay, Isle of Anglesey, in the pleasant companionship of his cousins, Keith Tribe and Campbell Hopkinson; his special chum, Campbell, living in an adjoining house, with his parents, Dr and Mrs E. Hopkinson. There the boys learnt sea-sailing, climbed the hills, and grew in strength and stature. While still a boy of thirteen or fourteen, he had summer sailing in the *Redwing*, and in a larger yacht the *Lona*, from Yarmouth in the Isle of Wight down the Solent and up the rivers there, with his brother and friends—days set in sunshine and glorious breezes—when the school-boy was pronounced by his big brother "the best crew in England."

At the end of his time at St Paul's, Cecil planned a great trip down the West Coast of Scotland, at the beginning of the summer vacation. He arranged it all carefully, and had post-cards sent by his friend, Elsie Purves, to the places which he chose on the map; and it seemed whimsically miraculous that it all worked out precisely as he had planned, down to every trap requisitioned, and every room ordered. His friend Kenneth Garnett joined him for the trip, and from each point the trap ordered conveyed his mother and sister and the baggage; the boys walking to the next place of stay. At Scourie especially we had a splendid day, walking and sailing over to Handa Island to see the great nursery of sea-birds on the cliffs. There followed a gay lunch, supplemented by fresh mackerel caught and painfully grilled on

the shore, over a smoky fire. So eight glorious days[1] were spent. On the last day we went by steamer from Gairloch to the Isle of Mull, to his brother's summer house, and then Cecil left us to join Dr and Mrs E. Hopkinson and Campbell, at grouse shooting elsewhere. That autumn he took up his residence at Cambridge.

In 1911 and 1912 two happy families spent their summer holidays in the Island of Mull, in two farms, Ardchoil and Auchnacraig, with a high grouse moor dividing them, on which there was constant coming and going and shooting, and with the glories of the Sound of Mull on one side and Loch Spelve on the other.

Those were delightful summers, now with friends from Cambridge joining in the sport. One of these, the most beloved, made the stay specially beautiful and interesting to every one. The men were constantly out shooting grouse and hare, or at sea, fishing. They had an open sailing boat, which Cecil fitted up with a tent so that three men could spend some days away, sailing in and out of the beautiful

[1] *Wednesday, July 28th.* Sutherland Arms Hotel, Lairg, Sutherland, N.B.
Thursday, 29th. Scourie Hotel, via Lairg, Scourie, N.B.
Trap ordered for morn. 31st.
Friday, 30th. Kylesker Inn, via Lairg, Sutherland, N.B.
Saturday 31st and 1st August. Culag Hotel, Lochinver, via Lairg, N.B.
Trap ordered for morn. 2nd August.
Monday, 2nd. Altnacealgach Hotel, via Lairg, Sutherland, N.B.
If rooms outside (i.e. in the annexe) can be secured, will want trap 3rd.
Tuesday, 3rd. Royal Hotel, Ullapool, Ross-shire, N.B.
Trap ordered for morn. 4th August.
Wednesday, 4th. Aultbea Hotel, Aultbea, near Gairloch, Ross-shire, N.B.
Trap ordered for morn. 5th.
Thursday, 5th. Gairloch Hotel, Gairloch, Ross-shire, N.B.

lochs in the neighbourhood; commandeering provisions, before starting, from the family store cupboard, which was thus left very bare. As the housekeeper ruefully remarked, "it was as bad as fitting out an expedition to the North Pole." Many quaint adventures they related on return—stealing in like thieves in the night, not sorry to find again comfortable house accommodation. And then, next morning, the joy of those who stayed at home, to meet them, safe and sound, at a great Scotch breakfast, in the charming farmhouse parlour!

More than once in the early October, Cecil took a quick journey from these Scottish hills, to kind friends who, in their beautiful highland home in the high mountains of the Tyrol, offered the greater attractions of "chamois, roe-deer and stag." There was a big mountain range to roam over, with here and there comfortable little huts, for the sportsman to spend a night in. This was in the Lechthal, and the host and hostess, who loved the English boy, confidently hoped to see him again, and he them, "when the shadows had departed." Even now they write of him as "a jewel"; that they had thought of him as one "who would bridge the gulf again"; that he stood out as "beyond compare" for manliness, kind helpfulness, and fine perceptions. The Jägers who hunted with him were devoted to him, and spoke of his consideration for them. His gaiety, endurance, and pluck delighted them. He always took his full share of any burdens. A fine shot, a manly sportsman, he carried off his well-earned trophies of chamois horns to his rooms in Trinity.

All these later happy times were vitalized by his ever-widening Cambridge life. He had work that suited him, wireless and other engineering in laboratory and class room; as well as rowing for his college, and delightful sailing excursions with his friends on the river—sometimes taking a light tent and camping out on the lower reaches of the Cam.

During his first year he joined the University O.T.C., transferring from the Infantry to the R.E. Company in his second year; and in his last year of residence he was a Sergeant in the Wireless Section. He was one of a band of close friends, young men of high ability, who often met at simple dinners in one another's rooms, and discussed, doubtless, pretty well all things in heaven and earth.

During his illness Cecil spoke of these discussions, and expressed a wish that they might materialize after the war into a Cambridge "Symposium," with the addition of the later experiences, at the front, of these friends and of himself. It was hoped, even after his death, to carry out this vision, but it was found impossible, the life over there was too strenuous, the awful needs of the moment too overwhelming to admit of the co-operation of his friends. There was no leisure for any consideration of the past, or for any possible beautiful interweaving of those happy young thoughts with the aftermath of sad and noble experiences. A short account of these meetings, and of Cecil's share in them, will be given later. Their origin and aim is indicated in the following letter from Mr B. S. Gossling, one of the group:

Towards the end of their second year, Cecil Hopkinson, with four others of the same College, came to make a practice of meeting together more or less regularly to hear and discuss an informal paper prepared for the occasion. A sixth member joined the meetings after a year, but they were not continued after the original members began to go down.

The subjects chosen covered a fair range from the first, for, although all present could at any time find common ground in the mathematics of their first year, they had actually branched out into different directions—Hopkinson himself into engineering, the others into physics, astronomy, pure mathematics and natural sciences. The papers seem usually to have taken the form of an attempted exposition of some more or less elusive idea of which the reader thought he had caught sight, whether in wanderings of his own or in the normal course of lectures in a novel subject.

This attempt was usually successful; occasionally, interest was translated into action, and the amused remainder would be reduced to watching a pair of frenzied collaborators scribbling in the middle of the hearthrug. Or again, discussion would arise like a tidal wave, carrying all before it, including the original paper whose author would retire well content with his work.

The members were too well known to one another to give occasion for verbal misunderstandings of the kind that lead to sterile controversy; there was as little conscious interest in one another's personalities as would be found in a family of schoolboy brothers. Any attempt at a crushing parade of knowledge was greeted as the intrusion of "facts," and was discouraged, to the point of uproar. The true biologist's point of view was not represented. This was unfortunate; had it been, the difficulties of discussion would have been of a more searching nature. It is very soothing, if not always very sound, to fall back on mathematical symbolism as a means of expression, but the audience must be a sympathetic one. Wit of the verbal sort seldom appeared; no one was remarkable for ingenuity of that kind. The society survived two years, but it never had a name.

Hopkinson's part in these discussions is described elsewhere; he was full of the spirit of the thing, and the steady confidence with which he would set out to show the way towards the inwardness of things in his own subject was typical of him.

Of Cecil's work in the O.T.C. Mr Gossling writes as follows:

During the later years of his time at Cambridge Hopkinson expended no small amount of time and of that energy of which he possessed such a store, in what he did with and for the University O.T.C. How far this may have been responsible for the good work he afterwards did in the "New Army" those who knew him as a soldier can estimate. He himself was one of those to whom such preliminary training was by no means essential, but there is no doubt that the subsequent record of other members of the corps was very much affected by their association with him and with his work.

His activities were many-sided, here as elsewhere. After the usual preliminary year with the infantry, he transferred to the R.E. Field Company, and after another year joined the wireless telegraphy section which was an offshoot of that unit. Later on it became part of a complete Signal Company. At the

beginning of his fourth year Hopkinson became Sergeant of this section, and as such was largely responsible both for their training, and for the design of the apparatus which they were constructing in the engineering workshops.

This work was of a kind to bring out many of the strong points of his character. The technical side of it was always on the borderline of true research, and in some of the measurements he made overstepped that line. But the subject has another side. It has a fascination and a glamour which are by no means conducive to steadiness of purpose, particularly where several enthusiasts are gathered together. Hopkinson soon picked out a definite mark for the year's work, and steered a good course for it through various vicissitudes. He made good use of the resources at his disposal. For instance, there was a complete Telefunken set available for detailed study; the sets constructed by the section in 1913 showed no signs of slavish copying of this finished product, but the calibrated "wavemeter" included was seized upon as a means of instilling numerical exactness into our notions. Again, the programme of construction was well carried through, and the section went into camp in June 1913 with enough equipment for every member to have his fill of experience with electrical gear under field conditions; and have it they did, and enjoyed it all, for Hopkinson's personal energy did not take the form of relegating all others to a state of standing round and handing him things. He had clearly discovered one of the main secrets of organization.

An enthusiast with good excuse for being fascinated, he was not in any way obsessed. After all the eager preparations of the preceding week, he could break the journey to camp for a ride through the New Forest, and later, could interrupt everything at an interesting stage and recommend a general holiday.

But the climax of his work for the section came as he was leaving it, when his mantle was being taken up by another. He came back to camp after giving evidence at a War Office conference with a problem to bequeath, a problem desirable of solution for clear military reasons, but presenting no certainty of success, an end worth working for. His judgment in seizing on this was sound, but he went further yet, working on at it during the succeeding months so that the new term found essential designs completed and work begun. We saw him again at the first trials, and what happened then was typical

of the man. The first results did not come up to expectations, but one glimmer of hope was observed: Hopkinson had come straight from the very different work of "shops," and he was at no time a professed mathematician, but at this point his first action was to dash off to the library to search for the appropriate differential equation. He found it, and after a short struggle emerged with the new line of action clearly indicated; apparent failure was changed into assured success.

The new programme was beset with difficulties, and strained to the utmost the capacities of all engaged; but Hopkinson had been right in his choice of the problem, and no effort was grudged. Perhaps he who can thus lead from afar is the greatest leader of all.

This work was only one of the many things on which Hopkinson was engaged, but to those who were with him in it the memory shows, as in a miniature, the promise of his life.

At this time, Cecil's ever-growing intellectual powers impressed his teachers more and more, and were crowned by a First Class in the Engineering Tripos. Cecil felt these years of communion with his friends to be a truly liberal education. His twenty-first birthday, in his tripos year, was made memorable by a wonderful week of gaiety and of happiness, with his friends around him: and the joyous bright Cambridge May week ended with the testimony of good work accomplished, and with the prospect of a yet fuller and more glorious year to come, as he was about to join his closest friend in joint life in beautiful rooms in the Great Court of Trinity.

Afterwards came a year in Sir Charles Parsons' works in Newcastle, where his sympathetic understanding of the foremen and men he worked with as apprentice taught him much of labour conditions and difficulties, and helped him later in his singularly successful management of his men in the Army. At Newcastle his life was very strenuous, greatly differing from the busy leisure of Cambridge, but a full life which he welcomed as a "splendid change." He was at the works at 6 a.m. and engaged in hard manual labour all day

long; the week-ends—Saturday afternoon to Sunday night—were spent on the Cheviots or among the mountains of the Lake District.

Several of his friends were in the North at that time in works in different towns, and on Saturday afternoons they journeyed, from their various headquarters, either on motor-cycle or car, to Keswick or to some spot on the hills nearer Newcastle. Great walks followed, on the Sunday, on the fells or mountains, often in snow or in gales, then a cold supper on the way back to their different destinations, and so to the works again at 6 a.m. on Monday morning.

It was a glorious life, and fit preparation for what was to come. His mother, close at hand, knew it; she passed a little later to the distant dominions, Australia and New Zealand, and saw there the over-seas brothers of these English lads, also in training, walking twenty to thirty miles a day to fit themselves for service at "Home" and "the Front." She spoke more than once to the Australian and New Zealand lads of the strenuous and gay life of English boys on this side, and it was agreed that the splendour of England and her great Dominions was safe in the hands of these sons of the same blood, over-seas and here.

August 4th, 1914. *War.*

Cecil of course answered the call at once, and obtained a Commission in a Signal Company of the Royal Engineers, with a section of twenty-five to thirty men put in his charge for instruction. Then came eight months of training these men in England for the work to come in France,—months greatly enjoyed, especially as his feeling of grasp and power over his men, and of his value to them, quickened week by week. The section, welded together, did their work well, and were devoted to their officer. Cecil always spoke of his men with as warm a regard and affection as they showed

when speaking of him;—and they did well, as the records show.

A few days before he left for France, on the occasion of his mother's last visit to him at Aldershot and in answer to her wish to know how near to the front line his work as Brigade Signal Officer would take him, Cecil drew two hurried sketches[1] showing the relative positions of the Main Headquarters and the system of intercommunication. To her anxious comment on the danger of a position so near to the trenches he replied, "the more efficient and distinguished I become, the further back I shall be moved," laughing at her request that he should aim at immediate distinction.

Then comes a last vision of the fine tall young soldier in his khaki, bound for the front in two days; bidding farewell in the dark street at Aldershot on that last evening: about to mount his motor-cycle—a vision of the noble, grave, determined, young face, so young still, almost boyish, vividly illuminated by the motor lights, the strong alert figure, leaping on to the cycle, a last salute, a "so long, cheero! mother," a whirling flash—then utter darkness.

. . . . . .

Cecil wrote many letters from France, at first full only of absorbed interest in the new but not anxious work in a quiescent part of the line at Ploegsteert; then, when he and his section were sent to the fighting zone near Loos, the details became more and more lurid. At home the anxiety deepened; posts were awaited with terror; then an awful telegram, the usual War Office telegram, speaking of "regrets" and "wounded." There was a week of terribly increasing anxiety, ending in a nightmare of a journey to Calais. Again and again in the stormy voyage his mother uttered constantly under her breath, "Cecil, will to live, those who love you are coming." And *he heard*. When his bedside was

[1] See p. 146.

reached, he, looking radiant, said at once, "I have expected you for hours, I kept hearing you and thought you were on the stairs." It was a glorious moment of reunion. Later, in his long illness, he frequently said: "that hour of meeting was the best I ever lived."

We found him in the beautiful Lahore hospital on Calais Plage, the waves washing almost to the foot of the walls. He had been brought there in thirty-six hours by hospital barge on the canals, from the clearing hospital near the Front, thus escaping shaking and disturbance. He bore this first journey well, cheerful and calm throughout. A captain, wounded at the same time, lying near Cecil in the hospital ward, sent for his mother to tell her of the boy's pluck and unswerving devotion to his men: "You may not easily hear, and I would like to tell you: I have known him at his work, and no officer in his part of the line equalled him in devotion to duty, unselfishness, untiring work. He never allowed anyone to do a task for him that he thought rightly his own; indeed, if he had not been so strong he would have worn himself out; he was up for promotion and deserves, indeed, any distinction that may come to him."

In August, 1915, Cecil was mentioned in despatches.

His General also wrote of him, later, as follows: "During the short time he was with me before he was so unluckily wounded, I had learnt to appreciate him as a very gallant, most hard-working zealous officer."

At this hour of meeting, Cecil looked so cheerful and well, it seemed impossible to believe that his wound was really dangerous. He had been struck by shrapnel in the head, while at work in a trench trying a fresh system of signalling by lights. In another second, he would have been safe in his dug-out. His men hurried to him as he lay in the bottom of the trench; but, though partial paralysis of the left side immediately set in, he refused to be carried to the dressing

station, and walked about three miles through the trenches to it, an almost incredible feat in his frightfully wounded condition; he always said this was preferable to being hustled and bumped round sharp corners on a stretcher. His immediate thought, he told us afterwards, was relief that after the overwhelmingly heavy work of the weeks following the move from quiet Ploegsteert to Loos, after the awful fighting in October, and the ceaseless work day and night, he had received a "Blighty" wound, which he was cheerfully told meant England and home; this second prospect specially delightful after twice postponed leave.

He often said, later, that he had been terribly disappointed not to have had one short leave at home, and remarked that it was a mistake to postpone it, and to keep on working at such high pressure. "The work," he said, "would have been much better done if a rest had been given; to do their best was impossible; it was a short-sighted policy."

But his great hope, often pathetically expressed during the first weeks in hospital at home, was that he would be able soon to return to his men. "I know they need me!" and indeed they clung to him. One of his good sappers, a man of talent and resource, Cecil specially helped. This man occasionally had short lapses from the strait path of duty, but, said Cecil, "I would not send him back to Head Quarters, the penalty would have been dire. I spoke faithfully to him; he responded and was truly invaluable."

This man writes now that he was treated by his officer as a "brother." He literally loved him. He has told how finally he carried his officer into the dressing station after Cecil had painfully walked so far in the communication trenches. They clung together, weeping; Cecil again and again saying "Do not leave me." Thus we learnt by degrees what a tremendous bond there was between him and the men of his section. He had the soundest views on the management of men. He

often uttered these thoughts during his illness and we knew that in this direction he would have gone far.

He had many interesting stories of these tremendous weeks. He told how on one occasion, when a battle was imminent, he placed all his men carefully; the most important post he allotted to his splendid Corporal Hanmer. He told the men to report continually and in no event whatever to leave their posts. During the long night, in the C.O.'s billets behind the lines, Cecil was glued to the telephone, passing the messages rapidly, as they came through, to his Major standing at his side. The Major passed them on to the Brigade General sitting at a table close by. "At one point," Cecil said, "I had an awful few minutes of waiting; there was a break in the continuity, and I knew it to be in the most critical part of the section. Then I remembered Hanmer was there, and I knew all would be right, and very shortly afterwards the signals came through again." "At dawn," he added, "as the attack slackened and the roar of the guns ceased, the Major turned round to the General and said 'our signals are good, Sir'; the General answered enthusiastically 'damned good.'" Cecil went on, "this was a proud moment for me, but I remembered it was really due to Hanmer and very soon hurried down to tell him and the section." Thus was the bond woven between him and his men.

Corporal Hanmer, now Lieutenant, when in England in October, 1916, wrote:

> You may rely on me to do my level best in order to see again my old section commander for whom I nourish a great regard, and whose example and unfailing energy in the exercise of his duty have impressed me more than words can tell.
>
> We have been in some very uncomfortable places together, and with the exception of his O.C. I think I may claim to have the honour of writing an appreciation of his excellent work at the Front.

It was at his instigation that it was decided at Ploegsteert to furnish the necessary cable for a completely buried, metallic return system of communication. The system was eventually adopted on the whole of the Divisional Front. He was there long enough to see the work on his own brigade area finished and in splendid working order, and when he handed it over to the Canadians, I don't think I exaggerate when I say there was nothing as good on the whole of the British Front. The Canadians certainly said they had seen nothing to equal it.

Later, at Loos and Hulluch, where we had a real taste of the uncertainty of life, his energy and lack of fear was the talk of the whole section and the battalion signallers. It certainly must have been noticed by his senior officers. He was here, there, and everywhere. Only yesterday I met a wounded man from the 12th Signals and his remarks were: "They need a few more 'Hoppys' out there: do you remember how everyone wanted to get into his section?" This man voiced the sentiments of all men who knew "Hoppy"; not that they were dissatisfied with their own officers, who were all excellent fellows, but there was a difference.

In May, 1917, Lieut. Hanmer, having then just heard of Cecil's death, wrote from France:

I shall never forget his wonderful personality and the respect in which he was held by the men he commanded. In all my work, I try to emulate the grand example he set me, when I was his corporal.

Sergeant Taylor, a man he greatly respected and cared for, came to his sick-bed in October, 1916, quite unexpectedly. He was only on short leave, but hurried from London to see his officer, and was delighted to find him as he thought recovering. On this visit, he gave vivid accounts of their life at the Front, and he told of one striking event as follows: "Our officer placed us all in position in the front trenches and told us what posts to take up. Just then a shell burst very near, shattering a tree close by; we all fell over or crouched down, only our officer remained upright; steady and fearless, he walked along our line saying, 'you

are not hurt, get up and take your places.' For courage and endurance he was unequalled," added the sergeant. This also was the enthusiastic testimony of Lieut. Hanmer, who came to see him twice at "Ellerslie." He said, "all along the line there was not an officer equal to ours"; he told how on most days their officer walked ten miles round the trenches to see that all was right. They tried to make him rest, but it was impossible: he was filled with consuming zeal, as with courage and endurance.

On a recent visit to Cambridge (February 9th, 1918, the anniversary of Cecil's death) Sergeant Taylor gave a vivid picture of his officer's unceasing energy. In the morning Cecil was always up and about before any of his section. At one town their first sight, as they turned out each morning, was Cecil's head projecting from the skylight of the attic in which he was billeted, "taking the air" as he remarked. Day and night he was busy, experimenting with new methods of signalling. He had an amusing habit of picking a blade of grass and biting it vigorously, apparently to assist thought, as he strode along at a pace always much too fast for the men behind him. One chilly morning, when he found his men shivering with cold, he prescribed "a good walk," and started briskly for an objective some distance off. This he reached, without effort, at his usual pace, and was presently joined by his scattered section, breathless and perspiring. He would leave his bed, to stroll round to his men at their night-stations, apologizing and explaining that he did not come to spy on them: "I am thinking things out a bit," he would say, "and it is a relief to come out." And while it seemed that his constant activity must wear him out, there was no sign of it; through it all he appeared extremely fit and tremendously alive.

The Sergeant was emphatic in his appreciation of the enormous value, to the section, of Cecil's constant presence

and of the ready help he gave them in almost every detail of their work. "There was no one there like him," was his repeated phrase.

Sometimes terrible pictures of War came back to Cecil in his illness. He related that on one occasion, after reaching Hulluch, he was walking along a path, when suddenly, on a hillside near by, not far from Hill 70, he came on a Highland regiment, hundreds of men in kilts, resting, as he thought, scattered up and down the hill. Coming closer, he saw they were all in their last sleep, white and still. They were the Cameron Highlanders, he thought, who shortly before, had fallen in the great attack. Many of them, he said, were so peaceful-looking, some still with cigarettes or pipes in their hands. It was an awful scene, perhaps the first time the lad saw death.

On another occasion, Cecil and three of his men were laying wires on a brilliant moonlight night. As he passed from one part of the trench to another, Cecil saw, lying by the path, a soldier who had apparently been dead for some time. A few minutes later, when giving the connecting wire a final pull before joining up the two sections they had wired, they looked back and suddenly saw the dead soldier raise his arm. When they approached, feeling, as Cecil said, "very queer," they saw that a loop of wire had caught in the arm and pulled it up.

He was at Calais only a day or two, and then was moved to Leicester Hospital, a journey too long and almost fatal. His magnificent constitution and strength, however, enabled him to rally. He was splendidly nursed, under the care of the distinguished physician Colonel Bond, who several times subsequently, as a kind and honoured friend, visited Cecil in Cambridge. At Leicester he was also devotedly watched by Captain Carter, and after four months in hospital there

(Dec. 1915–March 1916) was able to return almost to ordinary life. He could walk a little and seemed on the high-road to recovery when he reached his home at Cambridge, March 25th, 1916. He had a happy fortnight, being much out in the garden, and occasionally quietly seeing his friends. But there came a terrible relapse, from which he again partially recovered. Then followed months of fluctuation.

He only once spoke of death, just after this relapse, saying, with a patient smile, "Would it not be better to leave me quietly to die?" and on the anguished reply, "Dear, you must not speak—you must not even *think* of that," gently answering "Must I not? I never will again," and he never did: but sometimes looking at his mother with grave far-seeing eyes, he said, "You must carry on, mother dear."

This vigil, these months, given to those who most loved him, were precious beyond words; and his beautiful mind, except in short intervals of acute illness, was as charming as ever. He enjoyed books and pictures, and all the beautiful things placed around him, and every now and then he spoke prophetic words. He had a wonderful outlook on the past and future, hoping and believing all would turn out for the best. He was certain that this war was inevitable, a purge for growing sloth, for a dangerous want of sympathy between employers and employed, for a decadent love of ease. But he believed in his race. There was wisdom in his words, as when, in reply to some remarks on the apparently useless waste of life of preceding generations of Englishmen in exploration, in Alpine climbing, or in sport, he gravely said: "Remember, if our fathers had not taken these risks, and sought these outlets, but had sunk into comfortable sloth, they could not have had the sons, who are trying to win the war for you to-day."

Then followed nearly a year at home of waiting, waiting for recovery which never came:—a year so patiently borne,

so nobly used in unconscious influence on all those around him for all that is best in life and death:—a year never to be forgotten, with its suffering, its great hopes, its fluctuations—and then the passing on to the Great Beyond.

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep,
He hath awakened from the dream of life.

. . . . . .

He has outsoared the shadow of our night,

. . . . . .

He is secure.

. . . . . .

Of his last days and hours his mother wrote thus at the time: "I would like to tell you of his translation, February 9th, 1917; it was no ordinary death. Shortly before the end he clasped my hand and raised it to his lips, kissed it three times, and, when I kissed his dear face, his lips answered mine, and that was my *farewell*. That night, when I was in his room, after he had lain motionless for hours, he suddenly raised his right arm high up, as in salute, with shining beautiful eyes open wide, gazing upwards. Perchance it was to that glorious company, who awaited him over there —a greeting to his many friends—Eric Hopkinson, Bob Bragg, Miles Miley, St Clair Tisdall, and oh! so many more."

The day Cecil died Eric's father wrote: "Cecil and Eric this day are in Elysian Fields together," and assuredly *all* the gallant company.

After this, almost his last, movement, he looked so happy, unspeakably majestic. Then he slept for twenty-four hours almost continuously. Suddenly, his beautiful clear eyes opened wide again, and he looked out as though no longer here, but in some unknown world—thus for some twelve hours. At noon next day, with the windows wide open, the snow outside, the sun shining on him, he closed his eyes and gently ceased breathing, and from that moment until

they carried him away under the flag he had died for, he became more and more beautiful. No change showed on the fine face, the noble brow serene, the firm young mouth closed, unaltered. The nurse who loved him, and who, with me, had been with him from the very beginning at Cambridge, told me he had more than once expressed a wish to be in his khaki again "some day," and so she arrayed him in that, his hands crossed on his breast, the right hand over his sword. Each day we placed a sweet bunch of lilies of the valley on his breast, between his hands. He looked oh! such a splendid soldier, so young, so peaceful; his beautiful form, straight and composed, like that of a tall young crusader. On the serene face, sustaining and inspiring, the message was writ shining, clear for us to read: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

Four days later, to the sound of the Dead March in Saul, laid on an open bier and covered by the Union Jack, he was carried from his home by a large company of soldiers, down Trinity Avenue, and past his rooms in the Great Court, where he spent that happiest year, to the chapel. Two young soldiers, Will Carslake and Harry Hopkinson (just returned from Mesopotamia), followed closely behind, with his brother Bertie, my last son, and the rest of us, and a multitude of friends. Cecil had often asked Miss Parker, his dear nurse, to play "Lead, kindly Light," and the Chopin Funeral March (which surely breathes of Elysian Fields), and these were given in the chapel.

After the triumphant service, with many of the leaders of this University gathered round, they placed my boy again on his military bier, passed through the great gate, between the young choristers singing the Psalm, and then, with muffled drums, on to the little country cemetery, where he was laid to his rest, under lovely flower tokens, to the sound of firing volleys and to the poignant trumpet tones of the

"Last Post." It was a translation, as I have said. The members of Trinity College, I know, felt that in Cecil, they honoured the worthy representative of that gallant company of Trinity men, three hundred or more, many of them his dear friends, who have made the great sacrifice for faith and freedom, and lie away from home—Cecil, alone almost, in the dear English earth.

A few weeks after Cecil's death, his cousin and chum, Campbell Hopkinson, wrote:—

I have just got Mother's letter telling me of poor Cecil. Not that he is poor, no man who has given his life for his friends can be called poor. He has done all he could do in this world and it appears to me to be a most elementary Christian sentiment that God will reward him.

As for myself I feel I have lost the best man friend I had got. I have only got to go back through my life and think of the holidays Cecil and I spent together....It is something to look back on all those holidays without a quarrel and to think that from Cecil I never got anything except good.

To have been killed in saving others must I believe wipe out one's former mistakes, but Cecil had few to wipe out; his life, as far as I knew him, and I knew him well, was such a good one and yet so manly. I had so looked forward to seeing him again, but at any rate I can look back on a perfect friendship. It has of course been in a way drawn closer by his dying a soldier. I am sure he was a good soldier....For you his mother and for me his friend it is something to think of a life as near perfection as I have yet known in any man.

. . . . . .

I think now of that long vigil of fifteen months with Cecil as a time too glorious for words. It was wonderful to have that beautiful spirit, heart, mind, opened to me, as it were a book. For the most part he was very happy. He had a band of devoted women ministering to his every need, music, books, much joyous laughter, reading aloud, his dear friends coming and going. He often said how contented he was, there was never a murmur or anything but divinest patience.

Dr Wingate, his kind and most devoted doctor since July, said that he never witnessed such courage and patience; that it was all very well in the excitement and fever of the front to show pluck, but this splendid lad, who could ask with a grave smile on his face, "Doctor, is it to be another two years on this bed?" had divine courage beyond this. The great physician, Dr Head, who paid him many visits, and became his friend, wrote of him later thus: "Try to dwell now solely on the splendour of your son's life, given you for a time. Forget the sad details of illness and death, try to remember only that this life, twenty-five years, was as perfect as it well could be; the fine steadfast character enabling the boy to rise triumphantly above the trials of a long and terrible illness, wholly untouched by the possible deterioration, seen in some sad cases, of which I know; the sufferings and trials thus endured, in turn ennobling even more the beautiful nature, and raising it to yet greater heights. He is immortal, in that, by all testimonies, he is a shaft of good, of finest influence ever speeding upwards, influencing far beyond what we can conceive."

That valiant spirit has not passed away.
But lives, and glows
Within us, as a penetrating ray
Of sunshine on a crystal surface glows,
With many-hued refractions. He has fled
Into the unknown silence of the night,
But cannot die till human hearts are dead.

H. H.

Thus passed and endures the glory of this young soldier's life. The conflict and storm of life are over. The little boat depicted so many years ago, with so many happy years between then and now, has come to its final anchor, to glorious immortality. But to the watcher there is no loving message of consolation. No "Cecil to his mother," for Cecil is dead.

CECIL

BY HIS BROTHER

My memories of Cecil begin to be clear with the time of his entry at Trinity in October, 1909. During his school time I had not the experience of life necessary to qualify me for assuming that responsibility which would have been discharged by his father; had death not placed it on other shoulders. It fell to Cecil's mother and sister to direct his life during this time. On the other hand the difference of age between us—about 17 years—was such as to prevent at this period any close association in amusements and work. Thus I have not the sharply defined impressions of Cecil as a boy which belong to parents who have closely watched the development of their child—these live in double vividness in his mother's mind—nor have I those remembrances equally clear but different in character which brothers keep of their joint life in childhood.

But when Cecil became an undergraduate of the Univer sity where I lived and worked I began to feel some of the responsibility and to discharge some of the duties of a father towards him. At the same time his increasing bodily strength and widening experience, gradually narrowed the gap set between us in years. Thus began an intimacy having some of the qualities of the relation between father and son, and some of those belonging to the friendship of brothers of nearly equal age. I had experienced it in another aspect during the last few years of my father's life, for he was only 24 years my senior. I count myself fortunate that my life includes two such periods, and the memory of them is the mental possession which perhaps I value most. To share it

with others is a task beyond my powers of expression; and even if it were possible to me I should not care to do it. The somewhat disconnected notes which follow have, however, for me the value that the writing of them helps to keep fresh the memory which otherwise would be dimmed in a mental atmosphere reeking of the war. They may have a similar value for others who loved Cecil. Complete preoccupation with the task of beating Germany, while it has the merit of deadening the pain of loss, also tends to destroy those pictures of the lost which we shall prize above all things in the time to come when we shall have leisure to think.

During his first two years at Cambridge Cecil was not notably different from the ordinary undergraduate. He changed in this time from a (physically) rather awkward and untidy youth into a young man of good carriage and some regard for his personal appearance. Such thought, however, as he gave to the latter did not extend to details of dress, some of which he neglected with occasionally amusing results. I suspect that he cared only for those parts of himself which he could see in an occasional glance in a table mirror, for his shoes and socks were not up to the standard of his neckwear.

His first year was devoted to Mathematics, and I was not officially concerned in his studies. But he took lunch with us regularly on a Sunday and we frequently walked together. He would talk freely of what he was doing, and his comments on his lectures showed that the shrewdness combined with simplicity which is not an uncommon attribute of the English boy was in him unusually developed. He was much disgusted at his failure to get a First Class in the Mathematical Tripos (Part I), and I well remember going with him to see the list. As we walked away I attempted some comfort on the lines of belittling the importance of

examinations, and of this one in particular. It was received in a way which made it clear that while he had a pretty shrewd notion of the value of examinations in relation to life, he was not disposed to treat lightly his failure to attain an end to which he had set himself, though it might be unimportant.

During his second and third year he worked at the Engineering Laboratory, passing his examinations with distinction, but not showing (to my mind at any rate) any marked originality. But at this period he began to exhibit a decided independence of thought and judgment—a quality related as nearly to character as to intellect, and disclosed by attitude towards things in general rather than by examination results or the writing of scientific papers. Discussions between us on social matters or politics in which he took an opposing part in a loud voice and with emphatic gesture became frequent and made me feel more and more that he was fast becoming a man destined to lead others.

In his fourth year he worked with me at certain researches. At first he carried out experiments on lines which I laid down, and while he worked hard and was entirely reliable—an ideal assistant in fact—he did not strike out any line of his own. But towards the end of his time he produced some original work of great merit on certain points in the overstraining of steel. Unfortunately his idea had been thought of independently by another who published it just as Cecil's work was coming to a conclusion. It showed him, however, to be capable, certainly of original research of the standard required for a Trinity Fellowship and perhaps of still higher distinction.

It was, I think, with full knowledge of his powers in this direction that Cecil decided to leave Cambridge at the end of his fourth year (1913) and to prepare himself, by becoming an apprentice in Sir Charles Parsons' works at Newcastle,

for a practical engineering career. Therein I think he showed a sound knowledge of self, for though he had as I have indicated an aptitude for scientific pursuits, there can be no question that in the arts of handling men and of producing practical results he was destined to excel. I did not see much of him during this period, but such glimpses as I had showed a mind growing rapidly in the direction of accurate estimation of his fellows, and sympathy with them. He spoke more of the workmen with whom he associated than of the technical details of his work. The judgments on labour questions which he began to form at this time, while coloured by the generosity of his years and nature, were to my mind singularly sane and unaffected either way by the prejudices usually found in one of his up-bringing. According to my experience a youth of the usual Public School and University education either adopts without question the conventional views of his class about the iniquity of Trade Unions, or he reacts violently, goes to the opposite extreme and becomes for the time a Socialist. Both types often arrive after some years experience of the world at the same moderate view; to Cecil it seemed to come naturally from the first. I remember well a talk on such subjects in the course of a walk over the Northumberland moors. My own views had tended to crystallize into a somewhat thoughtless prejudice against the factory-hand, or certain aspects of him; Cecil's vigorous account of the results of his own observations shook me up and did me a lot of good.

During our vacations we spent much time together and were happy in that our University life enabled us both to get away at the same time and for fairly long periods. In the winter we went two or three times to the Alps. Beginning as a boy, Cecil became a strong and graceful performer on ski. I was far behind him, but acquired enough skill to make a passable companion on the long excursions which we

took together. The two of us, sometimes alone, sometimes with one or two others, covered most of the ground accessible from Montana, which was our regular resort for these holidays. Apart from detail my chief remembrance of these times is the good-humoured tolerance with which Cecil regarded my comparative infirmity. We would reach at sunset the edge of the great snow plateau of the Plaine Morte, 4000 feet above Montana, Cecil would disappear in a straight shoot down the steep slopes, and I would follow in painful zigzags with many falls. But I knew that 1000 feet down and at intervals thereafter I should find him waiting for me—grinning but sympathetic.

But the holiday which I cherish most in remembrance is the Summer of 1913. We bought an old, slow and comfortable ketch of 27 tons in Southampton Water, and sailed with various friends as crew to the Irish coast. The cruise was full of incident, but barren of adventure except for one very stormy evening in the Irish Sea. I can see Cecil now, taking his turn at the tiller and watching the steep high seas. We were all rather anxious—so he confessed was he—but I think we felt that there was no one among us better fitted to take charge in an emergency.

The good ship *Chough* was laid up at Queenstown—and she still lies there—with the intention that next year we should do another cruise. But the shadow of war was already there when we were completing our plans in July, 1914, and at the beginning of August we had abandoned them and found ourselves among the crowds in London watching the telegram boards in the clubs and buying newspapers every half hour. Cecil's first idea was to go, with many other young University men, as a despatch-rider. But the enthusiasm which carried so many—and not all of them young—off their feet at that time was in him tempered by strong common-sense. He realized, when it was fairly put to him,

that his place in a struggle which was to be long and stern, was that of an officer leading men, and he obtained a commission in the Royal Engineers.

Thereafter I saw him but little until he was brought home wounded at the end of 1915. Then, in the occasional flying visits which I was able to make, I learnt something of what manner of man he would have become had he enjoyed and suffered the experiences of years of ordinary life. For him they were packed into six months of war. We talked much of the work which he had done in France, often on technical points, but most on the qualities of his men and his dealings with them. He was himself quite unconscious of the foundation of his influence over them, though I think he knew its extent. I do not suppose he ever doubted that they would do to the best of their ability whatever he asked of them; they on their side never failed to justify his confidence, not from fear of consequences, but because they could not bear to disappoint him. It is a commonplace that such relations between an officer and his men, founded on love and respect rather than on fear, but protected from imposture by a shrewd insight into character, are the chief glory of the British Army and place it on a different plane from the German. Cecil had intellectual and bodily vigour such as are given to few, but at bottom he was of a type of which his country has produced and lost many examples—to her lasting glory, whatever the issue of the struggle in which they have been sacrificed.

January 1918.

LETTERS

I. JANUARY TO JULY, 1914

II. AUGUST 1914 TO NOVEMBER, 1915

LETTERS

I

JANUARY TO JULY, 1914

The following letters, written from Newcastle-on-Tyne in the spring and summer of 1914, give a picture of Cecil's life during that time:

Newcastle-on-Tyne,
January 11th, 1914.

Dear Mother,—The work at the works is rather dull now, as there is not much doing, so that all the good jobs have to be given to the men; consequently I have been having bad jobs. Unless things improve in the course of the next week or two, I shall ask for a shift into some other department. Yesterday I went to a meeting of the North East Coast Institution of Engineers and Shipbuilders and had rather a dull lecture on Aeroplanes. The Institution has quite a large library, which I expect I shall use a good deal.

To-day I went to lunch and tea with Mrs Harrison, and she very kindly asked me to join their party to a dance which I am going to on Tuesday, so that I can make my début into Newcastle Society under favourable circumstances. I am also going to a dance, at the end of the month, given by the Territorial Artillery, of which Miley is an Officer. I am not sure whether to go to this one or not, as it takes place on a Tuesday and you come on the next day. You might let me know the exact programme for that week-end. I want to go to the dance very much, but I am not sure whether it is worth while, with a dinner party the next night. I think I shall probably decide to go, as I should get to bed soon after 1 o'clock and need not be at the works till 8.30 a.m. I will wait till I hear from you first.

The snow is all melted now, and we are having nasty damp muggy weather, so it looks as though my ski-ing expedition[1] would not come off this year; also, the man with whom I was going has just taken a fortnight off to go to Switzerland, so I should have to go by myself if it comes now.

[1] A projected ski-ing expedition at Rothbury.

January 18th, 1914.

On Tuesday there was a dance preceded by a very pleasant dinner at Mrs Harrison's. The dance was on the whole a success, there is nothing exciting to tell you about it. I got all the partners I wanted, in fact I think I had one for every dance except two, which was rather lucky as I did not know anyone. Mr Lacie and Miley were both there and the former handed me over to friends of his, who soon got my programme filled up. Miley came with the Harrison's party. I did not get to bed till 4 o'clock; so, as I came into the works at 8.30 I was rather sleepy on Wednesday.

The next week-end I am going with Miley and a friend of his to the lake district. We get to Keswick on Saturday afternoon and then we shall walk to Sea-Toller, where we spend the night. We shall spend Sunday walking and scrambling about the hills and return on Sunday night. I think this is an excellent scheme, and if successful we shall certainly make a regular habit of it through the summer. In the summer we have a great scheme for taking my tent with us and camping. We should leave the tent at the farm at Rossthwaite, also changes of clothes, so that we could go there comfortably any week-end we felt so disposed, without having too much impedimenta.

This however is all in the air, and we may find the journey is not worth a single Sunday's climbing.

I foresee that there is no reason why I should not have a very good time here, what with one thing and another, and the prospect of the next few years is quite pleasing.

February 10th, 1914.

The first item of interest which happened last week was a general dropping on all the apprentices for bad time-keeping, in which I got my share, having taken several quarters during the previous week. I was bound over to keep extra special good time for the rest of this month, and in return lodged a counter-claim to the effect that I was never to be left idle without a good job. The result is that things are on a much more satisfactory basis now, and I always have plenty to do, which was not the case before.

Two of the apprentices had kept such bad time that they were suspended for a fortnight, and one of them nearly got sacked. In fact, there was a great row, and I was rather glad

I had kept better time than the others and also had a grievance in the shape of not having enough work to do.

Since then this house has kept most exemplary time, and every morning I beat on the doors of my two fellow-lodgers, who say they are dependent on me for the continuance of this reign of punctuality!

I had quite a good week-end with Campbell, though we could not do much, as his feet are not yet better. We went to High Force in Teesdale, which I daresay you know. There is a very fine waterfall there, I should think quite the finest in England if not in the United Kingdom. It is about 80 ft. high, with a good volume of water coming over it.

I am more and more struck with the number of places for week-ends round about here. Nolan has suggested that there might be some good trout fishing at one of them, so I am going to write round to the pubs. which I have been to and enquire whether this is so. If we can I think we shall go off for some week-ends; at first at Blanchland or Chollerford or somewhere like that. Do you know what has become of the fishing-rods, and could you send me one if I want it?

By the way, will you please ask Bertie to send me my notes for my paper, as I shall be here this week-end and might do some work on it?

February 24th, 1914.

This will have to be a hasty letter, as I am going to yet another dance (only a short one).

In my last letter I forgot to mention the latest innovation at the works, namely the introduction of the "lassies" to work in the armature shop. The first day they came to work in the big shop there was considerable excitement, and a works manager mounted guard over them all day. A rumour was spread abroad to the effect that anyone showing curiosity would be sacked, so that nobody dared go anywhere near them openly, though scouting operations were freely indulged in, the large machines and castings in the neighbouring bay affording excellent cover. After a day or two, however, they were taken as a matter of course, and nobody takes any notice of them now.

Last week I went to a very nice private dance with some people of the name of R. L. took me, which was very nice of him, and I enjoyed myself very much in spite of the fact that I was rather sleepy, having been to another dance the previous night.

I should not have gone to the first one had I known in time I was going to the second. I had another week-end with Campbell. He met me with the Ford Car at Northallerton and we motored to Aysgarth in Wensleydale, where we spent the night. We were much struck with parts of the ride up Wensleydale; the road keeps fairly high up and the view is rather fine.

I drove part of the time, this being the first time I had ever driven a car. I find it quite easy and should soon get into it. That night it snowed and rained hard, so we decided to go somewhere in the motor on Sunday. So we drove to Ripon where we had lunch. I had quite a lot of exciting driving along narrow winding lanes with sharp corners, villages, dogs and cows, so that I got quite proficient by the end of the day.

March 5th, 1914.

I have had another strenuous week-end in the Lakes. We again walked from Keswick to Sea-Toller in rain. However, on Sunday it cleared up, and contented itself with threatening to rain. We went up Great Gable, up the ridge by the Napes Needle. There was a cold wind blowing, and there was snow and mist on the top. However, the climb warmed us up a good bit. On the way down we scrambled about Grey Knotts a bit, and so back to tea at Sea-Toller. After tea we walked back to Keswick in rain and caught a train home at about 7.0.

This was the first respectable exercise I have had for some weeks, and I felt much better for it. At the end of last week I had rather a nasty cold, but this trip quite set me up again, in spite of the wind and rain, and I am feeling quite fit again now.

Work in the shop is uninteresting just at present, and I am beginning to look forward to the Easter Holidays very much. This week I have not been out at all in the evenings. I think an average of two nights out and the week-end is as much as I want; so I have been taking a week off. If the weather is fine, we are going off to Cheviot this week-end. Otherwise I shall stop at home and go to the theatre on Saturday night.

The difficulty about the Lakes is that there are no good trains back on Sunday night. We have dinner at Carlisle at about 8.45 p.m. and then have to wait till 1.0 a.m. for a train back to Newcastle, so that I generally do not get to bed till after

3.0, which is not conducive to good time-keeping. However, in the summer we hope to do it with my motor-bike and Sisson's cycle-car. Unfortunately Sisson is getting married in June, which will rather put the lid on things. It really is most inconsiderate of people to get snapped up in this way!

I had a telegram from Stratton the other day sent into Cambridge by wireless and forwarded on here, saying that the alternator is working well.

March 13th, 1914.

On Saturday I went on the motor-bike to Wooler, a place in the Cheviots. I had quite a good ride, and I did the forty-six miles in two hours, which was good going. Of course I had a good road all the way, the great North road, but there was a cold N.W. wind blowing which made me glad to have my thick Burberry coat on. Miley had gone up by train earlier in the day. We stopped at a good Hotel at Wooler and woke up on Sunday morning to find it snowing hard. However, we started out at 9.30 and walked solidly through mist and snow over the moors for six hours. At about 11.0 we arrived in driving mist and snow at what we supposed was the top of the Cheviots, the highest hill in the district. We might have had some good skiing, as there was quite a lot of snow about and fine open slopes. When I say we supposed it was the top, I must explain that it is a very flat-topped mountain; so we simply climbed till we found ourselves walking on the level, and finally we came to a heap of stones which might have been a cairn. From there we had quite an amusing time, steering a course with map and compass back to Wooler. We never got lost once, which was rather creditable, as we could never see more than half a mile. At Wooler we had a late lunch and then started off home. The country in the Cheviots is very bare, with extraordinarily few roads. I rather liked it, and parts of it looked very wild in the snowstorm, but Miley was very disgusted and compared it unfavourably with the Lakes, owing to the absence of any rocks or steep places.

Coming back, I had to motor-bike across snow-covered moors and had a most strenuous time, as the machine was going badly. However, I got going well as soon as I reached the main road, but I had just gone a few miles when the belt broke and I was compelled to push to the nearest railway station and take the next train home, which was very ignominious.

On Monday I went to a masked ball; this was a most amusing

performance and I enjoyed myself very much; it is positively the last this year.

Yesterday I went to see a business exhibition with Miley and interested myself in such things as calculators and card-indexing systems. We also saw several different kinds of time-keeping arrangements for use in works. I was glad they do not use them in C. A. P. and Co., as they record automatically the exact time at which you come in. With our system it is possible to be ten minutes late every morning with impunity, though recently I have not taken so much advantage of this as I used to.

To-day I got myself into dreadful hot-water at the works. I broke a tap in a steel casting; Bertie will explain what this means. The consequence was a lot of extra work and much blasphemy on the part of my foreman. In fact, in the language of Tyneside, he "played Holy War" with me, and I felt very uncomfortable, so that I expect it will be some time before I break another.

April 1st, 1914.

This week-end we went to the lakes again. Miley and Sisson went on a small cycle-car, and I on the motor-bicycle. It took us about five hours to get to Keswick, but I think I could reduce that by one hour fairly easily. It is a very fine ride over from Hexham to Penrith. The road is very good and rises to 1740 ft. near Cross Fell, so that there was quite a lot of snow. My machine went fairly well and got up the hill without much trouble, but motor-cycling is no way of seeing country. We found Valentine-Richards at Sea-Toller, with a few Cambridge undergraduates. He is the dean of Christ's and a considerable climber, I believe. As usual, Sunday was wet, but we managed to put in a very good day with plenty of exercise, scrambling about some caves and rocks on Glaramara. Coming back in the evening, I stopped two hours at Alston on the road between Penrith and Hexham, while I had a repair done on my motor. The others arrived there about an hour after I did, and we had dinner, or rather cold supper, at a very nice little pub. Finally I arrived in Newcastle at 11.15, so that I was very sleepy all Monday. This would not do if I had to do much thinking, but it does not seem to matter under present conditions, except that it makes me neglect my correspondence. I have been getting interesting work in the shops lately.

April 15th, 1914.

I got back yesterday without any trouble, the cycle going very well. It took me six hours, with one hour's halt at Alston for an excellent high tea, so that I did fairly well.

I felt a great disinclination to start work again to-day, especially as it was such a glorious day, but it was not so bad when once I got started. Most of the men and boys went on strike this afternoon, as it was such a beautiful day, and the shops were quite deserted. I very nearly did not come in, but in the end I decided I would come in after all, so I have earned a reputation for being a "blackleg."

It was really great fun in the Lakes; I hope we shall do it again next year.

April 20th, 1914.

On Saturday I went to Ripon, a distance of about seventy miles. I left here at about 4.30 and did not hurry at all till the last twenty miles, so that I got in at 8.0. The bicycle went beautifully.

Then on Sunday I went on to Bolton Abbey, arriving at the Braggs' just in time for a second breakfast. Altogether it was a very enjoyable run.

I spent a very nice slack day, and then started off home at 5.30, arriving here at about 10.30; so you see I do not scorch at all. As a matter of fact I should have come faster, but I lost my way several times in the dark and spent some time assisting other motor-cyclists on the road, who had run out of carbide or petrol.

I am going to get the kind of side-car which Willy Waller and the Phelon and Moore people recommend. It will probably come some time next week-end. I am much looking forward to taking you out in it.

May 19th, 1914.

Thanks very much for your letter. Since you were here I have been quite flourishing. This last week-end the weather belied its usual reputation, as it was glorious during the week-end, and looks as if it might be bad again now. We had a most excellent expedition to Sea-Toller. We climbed about Great Gable on Sunday and finished up with a bathe in the stream. I quite enjoyed the ride there and back, and the bicycle went beautifully. I went a good deal faster than Miley and Sisson, who were on a Singer motor-car.

Last week I had Tuesday afternoon off and had a trip to Warkworth, which is a very nice place near Alnmouth. It happened in rather an amusing way. As the day was very fine, one of the fitters in the shop jokingly suggested that we should take the afternoon off. So I said I would if he got our foreman's permission. Much to my surprise, he succeeded in doing this; so we went off with motor bicycle and side-car to Warkworth and back through Alnwick. It was a very fine afternoon and was well spent. I rode in my own side-car for the first time.

This story is not to be repeated in the ears of the mighty.

Since then I have got round my foreman very successfully by running him out to his golf club on the town moor in time for a competition on Wednesday evening, so that now I look forward to a vista of reasonably good jobs and generally improved conditions.

Have you sent off my tennis racquet yet?

June 8th, 1914.

This week-end I went to the lakes with Miley and his people. On Friday night I motor-cycled to Alston, and then on to Keswick for breakfast on Saturday morning. On Saturday afternoon we went and had some good climbing on Great Gable. By the way, I got Saturday morning off without any difficulty. On Saturday we got lost in the mist on Sca-fell. It was a very beautiful day with occasional showers and the mist lifting and making fine views. On the way home it poured till we got clear of the Lakes, and then we had quite an uneventful ride home, stopping, as usual, at Alston for supper.

Your loving son,
Cecil.

July 2nd, 1914.

Dear Mother,— This, I hope, will just be in time to catch you at Capetown. I suppose you now are tossing about in the Bay of Biscay. I wish I was there with you!

All is going well here. The work is decidedly interesting just at present, though it consists largely of looking on. It is very hot, and I sweat like anything all day in the hot, steamy test-house. However I feel quite fit, though not inclined for any violent exertion. It is quite a change after the fitting-shop. The usual procedure is that a "job" is run for a bit till some

defect appears, and then we have it to bits and try to find out what is the matter. This is very warm work indeed, as everything is so hot after running for a short time that it is quite impossible to touch any of the gear with your bare hand. Yesterday I had a very warm job, which necessitated my climbing about on the top of a hot turbine cylinder. It was so hot that I had to keep shifting about, so as not to get my feet scorched through my boots! However, it is quite good fun, and the men in the test are quite a nice lot. For the first time I am learning quite a lot about machinery, instead of absorbing subconsciously which is what we did in the fitting-shop.

Last night I saw Miley. He is thinking of putting in for a job at Firth's in Sheffield, but I don't think he quite likes the idea of leaving Newcastle, as he has a good many friends here now.

With much love from
Cecil.

July 16th, 1914.

Dear Mother,—Thanks very much for your p.c. from Teneriffe. You seemed to be getting on very well then. Nothing much has happened since I last wrote to Adelaide.

I went off for the week-end with Maunsell in the side-car. We went to Scarborough on Saturday afternoon, and back through York on Sunday afternoon. Some of the country between Stockton and Scarborough is very fine, with the sea and the moors. We passed through Whitby, which has a very nice little harbour.

This next week-end I am off to the Lakes again if it is fine, which is rather problematical, as it has done a lot of raining lately.

The work is not so bad, but I shall be very glad to get away from this place for five weeks at the end of this month. The worst of my "work" at present is that it involves such a lot of standing about doing nothing, which is a bore. However, it is generally quite interesting.

I see from the steamship list that you are within three days of Cape Town now, where you will get my first letter, posted on the day after you left.

There is nothing more to tell you, except that I am quite well and looking forward to seeing you back again.

July 23rd, 1914.

Dear Mother,—Since I last wrote to you, I have seen your diary, posted from Teneriffe, which pleased me very much. You seem to have been having a great time.

There is a tremendous amount of work going on in the test just now. People get kept up to 10.0 p.m. at night sometimes, but so far I have not had any of this, though I seldom get away at 5.0. The work is very interesting in busy times like this, so I don't complain.

This week-end we have another shot at the Lakes, weather permitting.

I leave here at the end of next week. There are great preparations going on in connection with provisioning the boat[1]. I am going out there a few days early to see that everything is ready.

Your loving son,
Cecil.

July 30th, 1914.

Dear Mother,—I am sending this letter to Sydney again, as your instructions of where to send letters ended last week. This week, I am glad to say, I am leaving this place. I go away on Saturday morning and join Bertie at Hindhead, where we shall discuss what I am to do at Cork next week; I am going there first to look after the fitting out of our ship. Bertie and Mariana are stopping at Hindhead on their way down to Milford.

On Sunday we lunch with Mr Yarrow, and I go to Nelly in the afternoon. On Monday I go to Queenstown, so I expect my next letter will be from there. B. and M. will turn up on Thursday, and then we shall be off once more on the blessed ocean. I hope you have found it blessed, and not too tumultuous between Cape Town and Australia. This life up here is all very well, but I have been slack lately and shall be very glad to get away. Moreover I have been at home for the last two week-ends, which have been wet.

Europe looks as though it might be going to get itself into a mess on a large scale. However, the war scare looks as though it might settle the Irish question, which will be a blessing.

I hope I shall have more to tell you next week.

Your loving son,
Cecil.

[1] The *Chough*.

II

AUGUST, 1914 TO NOVEMBER, 1915

Cecil's letters, hurriedly written in the intervals of his work, give a very clear picture of his life from the outbreak of the war until November, 1915, when he received his wound. They reveal, what has already been recorded on the evidence of others, his constant and whole-hearted devotion to his work; his care and respect for his men, and his thorough understanding of them; and something, too, of the weariness inseparable from work carried on under constant and increasing tension and with no real break or holiday.

Nearly all the letters given below were written to his mother; where those written to his sister or his brother are quoted, the fact is mentioned.

Trinity College, Cambridge,
August 8th, 1914 (*to his Brother*).

Dear Bertie,—After I left you I went to see —— and found him after a deal of waiting. He said they were too full up to test me in French or German. I then asked him whether I should be of greater use as an infantry reserve officer or a motor cyclist, and he emphatically plumped for the former. Consequently, I went to Chatham arriving there 6.55, and told Major —— about it, and asked his opinion. He refused to express one, so I took that to mean I was not essential to the welfare of the expeditionary force and so decided not to enlist. I had several talks with the men about it, and they seemed to think I had done the right thing. The colour-sergeant who was enrolling the motor cyclists expressed his opinion that it was a bloodthirsty job; so perhaps I am well out of it.

Having done this, I got some more petrol and went and had a meal and a talk with the rest of the motor cyclists. I then left Chatham at about 9.30, and was stopped three times by patrols with fixed bayonets, and some of them with loaded rifles, on my

way to Tilbury, where I spent the night. Finally, I finished up here and put in for a commission in the infantry at 9 A.M. this morning. Altogether a most strenuous time.

I hope I shall get started soon, but till then I shall stop in College and go in for a course of military study. Bragg is doing the same, having taken a commission in the terriers.

I spend part of my time running errands on my motor bike, but I draw the line at guarding the Cam bridges at night, which is what some enthusiasts are doing!

Hope to see you on Monday.

Your affectionate brother,
Cecil.

The Union Society, Cambridge,
August 13th, 1914.

Dear Mother,—I am firing this off to Wellington[1] in the hope that it will get you, if, as I hope, you carry on with your original programme. I have done such a lot in the last week or so, that I have forgotten what I have been doing. However, I will start from when I left Newcastle, about ten days ago. I brought the bike to town with me and went down to Hindhead, where I met B. and M., at the Moorlands Hotel. On Sunday morning we had a walk in the rain, all round about Haslemere and Hindhead. B. and M. went to lunch with Mr Yarrow and then motored on to Milford. I motor-biked to Nelly's where I spent Sunday night.

On Monday I met Bertie in town, and we decided to put off our cruise, war having been declared. I came up with him to Cambridge and spent the night at 10, Adams Road. On Tuesday morning I went to see what part I could take in the war, and eventually put my name down as motor cyclist in the expeditionary force. So I went up to town and left my bike at a shop to be repaired, and also ordered large numbers of spare parts. That night I went over to Cork in the company of a large number of reservists going to rejoin their regiments at the various Irish military stations. There is no doubt about the genuineness of the Irish spirit. The hatchet is definitely buried till the end of the war. I was thoroughly convinced of the loyalty of the Nationalists, and came back a confirmed Home Ruler. Wednesday I spent in attending to various matters connected with the boat. I came back to town on Wednesday

[1] In New Zealand.

night and picked up my bicycle. Just as I was leaving I got a telephone at the shop, telling me to go straight down to Chatham and report. This I did, and on Friday morning I went to enlist, with a number of other motor cyclists, several of them Cambridge men whom I knew.

We waited round for a long time, and signed various papers and got medically examined. However, about mid-day I got a wire from Bertie telling me to see him before finally enlisting. So I went up to town again, always on my motor cycle, and met him at Liverpool Street. He recommended me to take a commission rather than go motor cycling. However, I had been told my knowledge of French and German would prove valuable; so I went to the War Office to get tested in German. However, they were too full of work to do this; so I asked the man I was sent to, one Captain ——, what he thought would be the best thing to do. He recommended me to take a commission (rather than go motor cycling) in the special reserve. So I went down to Chatham again to see what they thought about it there. Finally I gave up the motor cycling idea, and left Chatham on Friday night, arriving here early on Saturday morning having stopped the night at Tilbury. Then I enrolled in the special reserve, which means that I have to go for several months' training. I have not got my commission yet, but hope to do so soon.

They are tremendously busy up here enrolling people, guarding bridges, and telegraph lines and so on. There has been a tremendous rush to enlist, lots of people you know have enrolled themselves as officers, G. P. Thompson is one. He will probably be fully qualified for service in about two months time. In fact, there has been a tremendous wave of military activity all over England, though on the whole I think people are taking the war calmly.

Now I really must stop. You see I have had a very busy time.

Your loving Son,
Cecil.

Shorncliffe,
October 30th, 1914 (*to his Sister*).

Dear Nelly,—I am afraid I can't manage this week-end after all as my C.O. is going away, and so I ought to be here.

I am having a very good time here. My C.O. is really a great

man. He is Major ——, of the Indian Army, 35th Sikhs, a very nice man and full of great stories about fighting.

I don't think I shall be able to get away much now, as there is such a lot of work to do here, but I might possibly manage next week-end (the 7th).

This is a lovely place on top of a sort of mild cliff about 300 feet above the sea. Folkestone is just two miles off, so you know the sort of country round about. Sometimes we can see the coast of France quite clearly. Last Sunday I very nearly got to you for tea, but broke down at the village between you and Oxted. There I spent two and a half hours repairing and then went on about twenty miles to a place called Ightham. As it was pouring with rain and the damage could not be repaired, I spent the night there and left the bike. I have not got it back yet, but shall possibly call for it on Sunday, in which case I may possibly roll in to see you for a short time; but don't expect me.

Our company, when it is at full strength, will consist of about one hundred and fifty men. They are a very superior lot of men on the whole, but unfortunately we have next to no equipment, and so we do nothing but flag-wagging, which becomes rather monotonous.

At present the officers consist of myself and another subaltern, an Oxford man who knows quite a lot about signalling, and the Major. I think we shall get on quite well together. We are in quite comfortable billets. This mess is in quite a small wooden bungalow and is very cosy. Altogether there are ten of us in it.

Give my love to Mother if she is with you.

Your loving brother,
Cecil.

Shorncliffe,
December 27th, 1914.

Dear Mother,—Christmas went off quite well, in spite of the contractors sending off the wrong number of turkeys for the men's dinners. I think the men enjoyed themselves very much. In the afternoon we had a concert which went off very well; we found quite a lot of latent talent among the men. There were also some lady performers, whom the Colonel brought along. Altogether it was a very highclass affair. In the evening I and two other subalterns went and had our Christmas dinner with

the Colonel. There was a very charming French lady there, an elderly lady, who was evidently an old friend of Mr and Mrs Colonel. She had evidently travelled a lot and knew the West coast of Scotland, so we got on very well. Colonel —— nearly went to Cambridge; in fact he had a mathematical scholarship at Trinity, but there was a war scare at the time, so he went straight into the army instead.

Yesterday we spent in recovering from Christmas. There were no flagrant cases of drunkenness in spite of thirty-six gallons of free beer, which is rather good for one hundred and fifty men of all sorts and conditions.

Strand Palace Hotel, London,
January 3rd, 1915.

You will no doubt be surprised to see I am here to-night; but it is possible I may be transferred to a wireless company and I had to come up this morning to be interviewed. Nothing is settled yet, so don't tell *anyone* anything about it. It happened like this:

About a week ago, I had a letter from Stratton saying he had submitted my name for a new wireless corps which they are forming, and yesterday evening I had a wire telling me to report at once to the War Office for an interview. This I did this morning and was told to go and see a man at Marconi's, which I shall do to-morrow morning. I think it may be quite a good job if I get it, though I shall be very sorry to leave the 12th Signal Company, as I like the people. Remember, don't tell anyone about it till you hear from me again.

Things here have been going quite well lately, though we are still very short of equipment. Uncle Edward is going to give us £10, with which to buy telephones. I feel rather awkward about this, as I have ordered the telephones, but if I get this wireless job I shall no longer be with the Signal Company myself, though of course I shall still retain interest in it. However, it could not be helped, as I did not hear about the new job till after I had ordered the telephones. Yesterday I went and had tea with one Mrs —— at Shorncliffe, who was out at Adelboden when we were there. She is quite an attractive lady and knows —— well. We had tea at a sort of Tango tea show at the Metropole Hotel. I did *not* dance. Pollard was there, also his C.O. They have had fearful trouble, as the huts in which their men were living proved to be untenantable, being inches

deep in mud and leaking like sieves. What scoundrels these contractors are. Finally they had so many men sick that they had to billet them all.

By the way, have you got any men billeted on you yet?

Also, did you get my letter saying I had bought sweets at the A. and N. to the value of £1. 0*s*. 6*d*. for Christmas, which were much appreciated and for which I paid?

The apples went down in great style.

There has been great excitement in the R.E. mess lately, as one of the subalterns, silly young ass, went and got engaged. Apparently the lady is about ten years older than he is; so it is not exactly all that could be desired. I feel that there is no time for that sort of thing now, and should say that in his case the excitement and time taken must have detracted from his efficiency. He does not belong to the Signal Company.

I am very bored just at present, as my interview at the W.O. finished at about 1.30; and since then I have had nothing to do. I went to see if Alfred or Bertie were at the Admiralty, which, of course, they were not. Then I rang up Russell Clarke and Billy, both of whom were away. Then I went out and failed to track down another friend who is in one of the Naval Brigades, and finally I came back here to write letters. Hence this long epistle. To-morrow I go to lay siege to the Marconi people in their lair.

Shorncliffe,
January 12th, 1915.

Nothing has happened yet about the wireless job; so I am afraid it looks as though it was off. If so I shall be very disappointed, as I am getting rather tired of this job with its lack of equipments and other difficulties.

I could not get up to see Bertie; but I hope I may do so this week-end. Otherwise nothing special has happened here lately.

We have had a lot of abominable bad weather, which is rather upsetting to the training; but it is getting better now. I am getting £10 from Uncle Edward for telephones, which will help us on a bit.

The lady who "worked" the engagement of the R.E. subaltern, which I told you of, has now started asking us all out to tea, but we are very much on our guard.

Give my love to Nelly.

Barham Rectory, Canterbury,
January 21st, 1915.

We have shifted into billets now, and so I am writing from here. We are made very comfortable and they are quite nice people, though I was rather alarmed at the prospect of stopping at a Rectory; however, we do not have to come to family prayers or anything of that sort. Last Saturday I went up to town and had dinner with Bertie and Alfred, then Bertie came and lunched with me on Sunday at the Victoria Hotel.

We were very glad to get away from Shorncliffe, but I think we have saddled ourselves with a job here. We are about twelve miles from Shorncliffe, and about five from Canterbury. However we are, of course, not crowded up as we used to be, and we shall get plenty of room for any horses we are likely to get. I have taken to riding regularly now every morning before breakfast, and I go about my job for about an hour after on a horse.

The villagers were very keen to have us, and there is great competition to take the men in. I think they will do quite well here, but we shall have to keep them hard at work, as there is nothing else for them to do, and we want to keep them out of mischief.

I am very sleepy and must go to bed now.

Barham,
February 2nd, 1915.

I am afraid I shall have to put off this week-end as well, as it is very difficult to get off now. All the men's leave has been stopped except in urgent cases, and the Major is not keen on letting officers go. However, I will let you know whether I can manage the week-end following.

The latest excitement was the arrival of forty-one South American mules at the end of last week. They always seem to arrange for the most inconvenient times for these little events, and this time the mules turned up at 11.30 P.M. However, fortunately it was a glorious fine moonlight night, and they brought them up in great style. Then, at about 1 A.M., we began to try to tie them up with head and heel ropes. After spending about half-an-hour unsuccessfully trying to tie the first one up (he always managed to kick himself free), we turned the whole lot loose in the farmyard and left them to kick one another to their heart's content. This they did; but, being unshod in the

hind legs, they did no damage to one another. The Irishman in whose charge they arrived told us the most hair-raising yarns about their prowess in the kicking line; but I think he was really trying to frighten us, as most of them seem to be of quite a pleasant disposition.

Yesterday about twenty drivers could be seen riding about the country on them. They were a very funny sight, with their great long ears and their donkey's hee-haw.

I have heard nothing about the wireless job, which is very disappointing.

However, I am very happy down here, and, if it was not for the possibility of the better job, should be quite content.

As a matter of fact, I am much better off than most people now.

I am getting our motor cyclists to give my motor-bike a thorough overhaul. It is in a very bad way, as I have rather neglected it lately, having so much else to think about; but I think, by the time they have finished it, it will be as good as new again. Fortunately I can dispense with it at present with comparatively slight inconvenience, and I can generally borrow somebody else's motor-bike when I really want one. There has been a great shuffling up of the officers' motor-bikes lately, two of them having sold theirs to two others, and one having bought one from outside. I shall keep mine for the present, probably till the war is over.

Now it is time for dinner.

How is Nelly? Give her my love.

Barham,
February 7th, 1915.

I am delighted at the much-needed male addition to our family, and much relieved to hear that it has passed off well and both are flourishing. Please give my best love to Nelly and tell her to take care of herself. I expect if I can get away I shall have to come and "do the heavy knut" at the christening. I am much looking forward to having further particulars by to-morrow morning's post.

Thanks for your last letter.

The motor-bike should be ready by the end of this week. As a matter of fact, I don't miss it, as much as you might suppose, as I can nearly always borrow one, or get a ride in a side-car when I want to go anywhere.

FB-150

Yesterday we went and had a great football match against King's School, Canterbury. Neither side scored, but we had a very strenuous game on a very muddy field, and our men played very well, considering they get so little practice. We are getting on in the way of equipment now, having been presented with seven more telephones after the two which Uncle Edward gave us. This is the way we manage to get on, in spite of the kindly interference of a well-meaning War Office.

By the way I forget whether I told you about the way in which we came here. I believe I forgot to in any of my letters. You see we were very crowded at Shorncliffe and it was murmured that we were to be billeted in the slums of Folkestone. So I and another subaltern went round the various villages and decided that this place would suit us nicely. Now all the R.E. companies are under the thumb of the C.R.E., who is a dear old retired Colonel who dare not act without strict adherence to the long round of official formalities, which means that it would be quite impossible to get anything done. However at the time he was away, and our C.O., Major ——, was acting C.R.E. So he, in his capacity as C.R.E. gave himself the order in his capacity as O.C. 12th Signal Company, to move into billets and shake the mud of Shorncliffe off his feet. Then things began to move quickly, until about twenty-four hours before the time we were due to be off. Then suddenly the real C.R.E., Colonel ——, got wind of our little game and sent an urgent telegram saying, "Send at once full particulars about your authority to move into billets." However, he was too late to stop us. The Major replied, "Office closed, full particulars will be sent from Barham." So we managed to thwart the authorities with their own Red Tape weapons.

This was undoubtedly an excellent move, as I think we have put in some quite good work since we have been here. Certainly, we have done better than we could at Shorncliffe. The mules are really quite a success, and most of them seem to be fairly tame. We do our training in a large park close by, and every day men may be seen trotting round on mules and horses learning to ride. The country is excellent for flag-signalling, and we have made a miniature range in a chalk pit; so we are really doing quite well.

We shall probably move on to Aldershot in about a fortnight; but this is not settled yet.

I am afraid there is not much likelihood of my getting away

just yet, as the men are not allowed leave except in cases of urgent necessity, and the Major does not like the officers to go away, as it does not seem fair. Consequently, though I probably could get off, I prefer not to ask. Is there any chance of your getting down to Canterbury next week-end? The prismatic compass, which you are giving me, is ready now, and I have sent a cheque for £5 for it.

Barham,
February 26th, 1915.

We leave here at 1.30 A.M. on Monday and shall be very sorry to go away from here.

Our place is being taken by the 23rd Signal Company. We are going into barracks at Aldershot, and I expect we shall be very crowded, and not half as well off as we are here. Also there is a rumour that there is to be no week-end leave on any pretext whatever, which is a horrid nuisance. We have had hard frosts here lately and some snow; so we have not had any riding before breakfast this week. One thing will be, we shall probably meet old friends at Aldershot, as some of the other signal companies will be there.

I remain behind on Monday to pay the billets, but after that my address will be:

R. E. Mess,
Aldershot.

It will be horrid being in a Mess again, especially the Aldershot one, which is very expensive, and where one has to mind one's P's and Q's very much.

The motor-bike is going very well now, and I shall motor-bike over to Aldershot.

We are gradually collecting equipment, but we are short of officers, as we have four hundred men, and only four subalterns. I am not sure if I can get away for any week-ends, but will let you know when I get to Aldershot.

Please give my best love to Nelly.

Aldershot,
March, 1915.

I arrived here last Tuesday, and am feeling rather fed up. It is a nasty change after the comfort and freedom of Barham. However, it has resulted in a big influx of equipment and horses, which is a good thing. The main body of the men left Barham at 2 A.M. on Monday morning. Quite a number of people turned

out to see us off. I think many people in the village were quite sorry to lose us. Our place was taken by the 23rd Signal Company, whom we considered were not so high-class as ourselves.

I was left behind with three sergeants, and the thankless task of paying all the remaining billets. This took me the whole of Monday to perform, and I was only 6*d*. out at the end of the day, which was rather good with about one hundred and fifty billets to pay all in odd amounts.

On Tuesday I left Barham and motor-biked over here. It was a very jolly ride over, and I passed through Westerham and Oxted, and wished Nelly had been there.

Next week we are going to do our shooting on the ranges. Whether I can come or not for the week-end depends on how fast we manage to get through this, as until we have finished it all the officers will be required to work at high pressure. I think it will take us all our time to get through, but I can't tell whether we shall get done before Saturday until I see how we are getting on.

This place is cram full of soldiers and mud. As far as I can see the only way to train our men with any comfort will be to march them out a long way every day, and then get busy with our telephones. Anywhere in the immediate neighbourhood is crowded with troops, who get in your way.

Wellington College Station,
March 20th, 1915.

I am now doing "Brigade training" which means I am all on my own with my section of twenty-five men, two mules and two horses. The Brigade, consisting of four battalions, each with 1000 men, goes out on field-days, and I send my men pushing round on bikes carrying messages. It is quite an interesting job. I had some difficulty in getting away, as Major ——, my C.O., is away in France seeing what he can learn on the spot. However, I went to my Brigade Major and told him I wanted to come and so he ordered me to do so. I don't know what the Major will say to my vanishing with twenty-five men in this way; but I was ordered to do so, and so cannot help it. I can see it is going to be a strenuous time.

To-day we marched from Aldershot and had a field-day on the way, which was quite strenuous.

I had to arrange for all the transport and victualling of my men, which I find rather difficult, not having done anything of

the kind before. However, I think we are getting on all right.

It was great fun getting home again, but I don't see any chance of getting away again for some time.

Now I am tired and must go to bed.

Wellington College Station,
March 23rd, 1915.

I am getting on quite well here and enjoy being on my own very much. We go out all day on field-days, so I keep very fit. Generally I go on a horse, and am out from 8.30 in the morning till 4 o'clock in the afternoon. I take a nosebag for myself and my horse, and so am quite independent. My men are all billeted in an empty cottage just behind the hotel. They are working very well on the whole, and seem to be quite content. They certainly ought to be.

In fine weather they have their meals outside in the pine-woods, which come right up to the door of the cottage. There is a good deal of grousing about the food, owing to the insufficient cooking arrangements; but I tell them that is incidental to being on active service. I have twenty-six men with ten push bikes and two motor dittos and a very little telephone equipment.

I am billeted under the most luxurious conditions. I dine with the Brigade staff, which consists of the Brigadier, the Brigade Major and the Staff Captain. This has its disadvantages, as there is nobody below the rank of the Staff Captain to talk to, and I feel rather out of it.

I have to make all my own arrangements for my men, and in fact run my own show entirely, which is very pleasing, though at times very strenuous. By the way, I wish you could send us some kind of very substantial oil lamp with a tin shade if you have got one, like we used to have at the mill. We are also short of scrubbing brushes and cooking pots, but they seem to get on somehow. This is most beautiful country hereabouts, and I enjoy our days out very much. Being signalling officer, it is part of my job to know everything that is going on, which is very interesting.

We are going to be here till the 7th April, and I shall not be able to get away till then, but this is a very comfortable hotel if you care to come for either this week-end or next. Let me know, and I will send you a wire on Saturday morning to say if

I can do with you. You see we may have a night attack on Saturday night, in which case I could not manage it.

Give my love to Nelly.

Wellington College Station,
March 30th, 1915.

I am back here now and very glad to be out of Aldershot again. I am afraid I can't get away as I shall have my men here; but I wish you could get down here for the week-end; I think I could certainly get you a room somewhere, though the place will probably be full. However, if you have already arranged to go to Minehead, don't worry. I am afraid I can't possibly get down there. I shall probably be free for Friday afternoon and the whole of Saturday and Sunday, and I wish I could get away, but unfortunately I cannot leave my men to their own devices.

We had to go back to Aldershot for a most fatuous field-day on Saturday, otherwise I should have had you and B. and M. down here for the week-end. We started early on Saturday morning and spent the greater part of the day doing nothing, which was a very chilly game. Kitchener came down, but did not come anywhere near us, which was fortunate, as I hear he was in a record bad temper. Sunday and Monday were spent with various odds and ends, and finally I rolled up here to-day with my twenty-six men.

Let me hear soon about the week-end.

Aldershot,
April 5th, 1915.

Many thanks for your letter. I have been getting on alright. Not quite so strenuous this week, but I had a hard day to-day, and we are out all night to-morrow; so I shall have plenty to do. I can't manage this week-end as I have to be orderly officer for Sunday. We are really getting properly equipped now. I became quite a hero for a short time by going down to Ordnance to get some wire, and coming back with a whole cart full of all sorts of equipment. However, I don't think we shall go out just yet, as there are several other Divisions to go out before us. There was a great rumour the other day that we had to draw pith helmets, and the whole Division immediately jumped to the conclusion that we were going to be sent to the Dardanelles. I was detailed to go and draw 200 of them. However it turned

out that a telephone message had come through to tell us to draw 200 "armlets," bits of blue and white flannel which you strap round your arm to show that you are a signaller, and the man who received the message took it down as "helmets," being rather shaky in his h's!

We have just had a fearful bombshell dropped in the company. Our commanding officer has just been transferred to another unit.

Now it is time for bath and bed.

April 5th, 1915.

Many thanks for your letters. I hardly think it worth your while coming on Thursday or Friday, as I am generally out till 6 or 7 or sometimes later, and I have to go to bed early so as to get up early, so that I can hardly see you at all. However I think I can manage to see you all right, if you come on Saturday for the week-end. On hearing from you that you can manage this, I will try to get you a room. I think Aunt Mary had better not come as I shall probably have great difficulty in getting two rooms. I am sorry I could not get to Minehead, but there were no trains, there or back, on Good Friday or Sunday. I left Wellington on Thursday morning, and went into billets with my section in a farm for that night; so did not get your wire till Friday afternoon. I then went to Nelly's and so back here. I don't like being back at all. I had a very jolly slack time, for which I was very grateful, at Nelly's. Mr Ashford, the headmaster of Dartmouth, was there. He is quite an interesting man to talk to. By the way, I shall be getting three days' leave soon, which I should like to spend at Cambridge; so you might let me know what time would suit you best. I should like my camera if you can find it, but am in no hurry.

Yaldin's Cottages, Eversley,
April 21st, 1915.

We are in reserve to-day, so I am having a slack time. I believe there is a furious battle raging somewhere; but so far it has not troubled us and we just remain in camp, ready to push off if we are wanted. I have had quite a strenuous time since we last met, and came out here the day before yesterday. We are ensconced in an empty farmhouse, quite comfortable, as it has just been done up. The Brigade is in camp close by; to-day we are having a grand slack.

On Sunday I saw Will, but only for a few minutes, as I had to spend the whole of Sunday afternoon getting equipment ready for coming here. I was sick at having him there like that but being unable to see him.

Now lunch calls, and there is nothing else to tell you.

Aldershot.

I forget when I last wrote, but I think it was sometime on divisional manœuvres out at Eversley. Well, various things have happened since then. When I got back I found shirts and medicine case complete—"very nice too." I quite wished I had got a cold or something as I looked through all the nice little medicine phials, but unfortunately was feeling perfectly fit. Also I got *The Minor Horrors of War*, which I find very entertaining. Divisional manœuvres were only moderately successful, as far as I was concerned; but I managed to get through without making very many serious mistakes.

We marched back to Aldershot on Friday.

On Saturday, Campbell and Wilfred picked me up in the Ford car, and we motored down to Southsea, after picking up Mr Ellis on the way.

We then spent a very jolly week-end together with a theatre on Saturday night, and motored back here on Sunday afternoon. Campbell was quite cheerful. Wilfred is going through a course at the Staff College at Camberley.

This is undoubtedly the strenuous life, and I should much appreciate a holiday; but I don't think there is much chance of that now. However it is undoubtedly a first-rate job. I ride a lot now, and am getting more confident on a horse than I used to be. This Sunday I hope to go and see Will: I saw him for about five minutes, ten days ago.

Aldershot,
May 13th, 1915.

I have just got your letter to-day, for which many thanks. I believe it must have been lying there for some time, as I have been away bivouacking for two days. Luckily, we had grand weather; and so it was very nice sleeping out in the open. It seems we shall probably go abroad sometime about the end of next week, so I sent you a wire this evening. I have got a room at the Tumble-down-Dick Hotel for you.

I should like to get away, but unfortunately it can't be done.

Now it is time to go to bed, as I have to get up at 3.30 A.M. to-morrow, and it is now 10.30.

Aldershot,
May 24th, 1915.

We are still here, with no prospect of going just yet, though we have paraded once or twice complete as for embarkation.

I am afraid I don't do anything half so thrilling as the gentleman in the *Westminster Gazette*. He was an artillery officer, not really a signaller at all. I saw Bertie here last Friday, but missed him on Saturday; so he had gone by the time I got out to the aircraft factory to look for him.

He gave me a copy of the way to make my will.

Since I saw you we have had one field-day, and have been making ourselves more and more ready for our departure. To-night, I am taking my section out to practise their work in the dark, and so shall be out all night.

I will write to you again, when I know when we are going.

Aldershot,
May 28th, 1915.

Please excuse this paper, but it is late and I cannot get hold of any other. I move off to-morrow morning. I have had a most strenuous day getting everything ready, as I did not hear I was going till this morning and it came as rather a surprise. However, I think I got everything properly fixed up.

My address will be:

R. C. Hopkinson,
Signal Officer,
35th Brigade,
12th Division,
B. E. F.

I am sending off my surplus kit to Cambridge, and my motor cycle to be overhauled. I have sent off my will to Bertie.

This letter will have to do for Nelly as well, owing to the lamentable shortage of paper. Please give her my best love.

It was lucky you managed to get me on the telephone, as just to-night I happened to be in the next room, having a sort of last-night-in-England beano. Generally, I am in another house altogether. The beano was rather a failure, as we had no

pianist. However, we managed to make very merry in spite of this.

I shall write to you when I want anything sending out.

With much love to you and Nelly from

Cecil.

May 29th, 1915.

Dear Mother,—The boat is leaving very soon, and I have just this opportunity of saying that everything is alright.

My section is split up into two boats, which is rather annoying, as the first boat we got on to was too full.

I will write again from Havre.

With best love to you and Nelly from

Cecil.

(Left early May 29th for France)

On active service.

Herewith is picture of our good ship, which please keep. We are having a lovely smooth crossing and a beautiful night.

Your loving,

R. C. H.

May 31st, 1915.

Dear Mother,—I have now been on the train for some time since landing. So far, I have no warlike deeds to tell you about. It has just been an ordinary journey across the sea and then a long time hanging about till we got into a very slow train, in which we have been ever since. From time to time we stop for an hour and water the horses and make tea. I am in a second class carriage, and my men are in horse wagons. This sounds very bad; but they are not so badly off really, as I managed to get two wagons for twenty-two men. Each wagon is supposed to hold forty! They put straw down to lie on. I was lucky in having no trouble with my eight horses. They most of them went in like lambs; and I found that, by pulling one of them in the opposite direction to what I wanted it to go, it backed away into position beautifully and was ignominiously tied up. I was told that it was the first day on which they had not had at least one casualty amongst the men putting the mules into the train.

Give my love to Nelly.

Love from Cecil.

June 1st, 1915.

This is a continuation of the letter which I wrote in the train and which I did not post.

I am feeling very cheered with life just at present. We are in tip-top billets in a large sort of farmhouse in a most delightful small village. We get good food and are not overworked, and the war seems much further away than it did in Aldershot. Occasionally we can just hear the big guns booming. My men have got quite a good barn to sleep in, and the horses are out in the open.

After getting out of the train we had to march about six miles to get here, and finally turned in about 2 A.M. Several of the wagons got separated on the march and took a wrong turning, and I had a long ride in moonlight trying to find them. This I failed to do, and so they did not turn up till the following day. However we are complete now.

Your loving son,
Cecil.

June 1st, 1915.

Dear Nelly,—I have now a good opportunity for writing, having nothing else to do; hence the remarkable number of letters I have written since coming across.

I have nothing exciting to tell you. I am feeling very cheered with life at present. We have excellent billets in a very pretty village, and if it was not for the war, which still seems very far away, I could be very happy here for a month or two. I have a moderate amount of work, but nothing like the horrid rush there was at Aldershot, and the men play up like anything. I quite enjoyed the journey here. On the boat I was very lucky, as the officer in charge was one of the Brigade Staff and a friend of mine; so I was able to share a cabin with him right on the upper deck. The train journey was rather slow; but the horses got through with no more than a few bites which they inflicted on one another, having nothing else to do. We have a padre with us, quite a good chap.

With much love from
Cecil.

June 6th, 1915.

Dear Mother,—Just a line to say that everything is O.K. I have been to the Front for three days' instruction, and have

returned unscathed and without so much as seeing a Hun. In fact, everything was most extraordinary and very interesting, not a bit like what one imagined it to be. The guns shot at one another from time to time, and I saw some shells bursting, but never sufficiently near to be alarming. I also saw them shooting at aeroplanes, which was a most fascinating sight. They never seemed to hit one, though they shot off any number of shells. After my three days' instruction, I came back to the "back of the front" in a gorgeous motor-car, just like any general; and now I am back again with my Brigade: altogether it was a most interesting experience.

I was relieved to find nothing had gone seriously wrong while I was away; the Brigade was managing to exist in spite of my absence.

Now it is time for bed.

With much love from
Cecil.

June 7th, 1915.

Many thanks for your letter which I got last night. This letter will probably reach you at the same time as the one I wrote last night; but I am stuck here all day with nothing to do by the side of the road, and so am amusing myself writing letters. We are marching along an interminable *pavé* road, and are halting for the day so as to go on in the cool of the evening. So far, I have enjoyed my time out here very much. Everybody is very nice, and my men have come up to the scratch very well. I get plenty of rest and plenty to eat, and just enough work to keep me going. One thing I can see is that I have come here prepared to be much too uncivilised. The time for roughing it has not yet arrived, so I shall probably deluge you with requests to send things out. To begin with, I should like to have a new tunic. In my kit, which should have turned up from the R.E. Mess, Aldershot, you will find an old tunic. Take this to a good tailor and get him to take measurements from this and make a good new one for me. I suggest your going to Sabberton in Sidney Street. I want it made of proper good khaki. He can send me out the bill, as I am making a lot of money now. I hear a murmur that I am to get an extra 5*s*. while on duty, this bringing my total up to 18*s*. a day.

Well, enough of these sordid matters.

The only thing I regret now is that I did not join the flying

corps. If I had known it was going to be more safe, I think I should have tried for it; but at the beginning of the war I should have thought it a mad thing to do. I have watched them shelling aeroplanes, and I should think it must take a great many shells before they make a lucky hit and bring down an aeroplane. It is a very pretty sight, and exciting to watch. You hear a bang, and then after a long time you see a little puff of smoke, generally some distance from the aeroplane, where the shell is bursting. On a still day you can sometimes see about fifty of these little puffs of smoke like tiny white clouds in the sky. It must be almost impossible to hit them when they are flying really high. As I write, there is one of these battles in the air going on in the distance. It is so far away that it is almost impossible to see the aeroplane with the naked eye.

It looks as if we are in for a good day's loaf to-day, which is very pleasant in these strenuous times. I am writing in a nice shady spot, with the road along which we are marching just on the other side of the hedge.

We were very very lucky, as we just happened to halt opposite the headquarters of an ammunition column. They have a very comfortable camp and are giving the Brigade Staff, which includes me, lunch. The Colonel has a bath rigged up in his tent, which he let me use this morning. I was very glad of it, as it is very hot.

But what beats everything in the way of camps is one which I saw within two miles of the firing line. It belonged to a battery of artillery. They had a piano, gardens outside their dug-outs, lots of flowers, and their own canteen complete, with beer. From time to time they would drop a few shells in amongst the enemy from their guns, which were quite close by.

By the way, I forgot to say that I want some tobacco and cigarettes.

Well this letter is quite long enough.

Your loving son,
Cecil.

June 7th, 1915.

Dear Bertie,—I have been sitting down beside the road here all day, waiting for the cool of the evening to march on, so am reduced to letter-writing which is rather an unusual amusement for me. So far, I have been enjoying myself very much. I have chronicled most of my doings in a letter to Mother. I had a

No 2. SECTION 15TH DIV: SIG: COY: R.E. 1915.

three days' instructional trip to the front, where I learnt quite a lot. When I got back, the division had started moving and has been marching for the last three days. We generally start about 5 o'clock in the morning, as it is very hot and dusty just now.

On my trip to the front I went right up into the trenches. I don't think I told Mother this. It was really most interesting. After they have been settled for some time, they get an enormous complexity of telephone wires within the Brigade area. Each line is very often in triplicate, as they get cut by the shell fire. It rather appals me to think that I shall have to "take over" one of these systems when we get a move on.

While we were in the trenches, the man I was with put up a small mirror on the end of a stick, to act as a periscope. He had not had it up more than five seconds before a bullet came and smashed it. The mirror could not have been more than 2" square; so it was a pretty good shooting at 50 yds. range. He got rather badly cut by the broken glass and had to go to a doctor in the trenches to be dressed, so I saw everything.

It is great fun watching the aeroplanes dodging the anti-aircraft shells. It must require an enormous number of shells to bring down one aeroplane. I have not yet seen one which appeared to be really close.

Your affectionate brother,
R. C. Hopkinson.

June 10th, 1915.

Dear Mother,—Will you please let me have Eric's postal address, as I gather from your letter that he is in the same place as I am now. No, we have not started fighting yet, and I don't think we shall get to work seriously for some time yet. We go into the trenches first for a week, to learn our job; this we do in a few days' time. They will mix us up with the seasoned troops, who are supposed to teach our men how it is done.

For the present we are billeted in rather a slummy town. I am in a so-called *château*, which is really an ordinary house in rather a nice garden. My men sleep in the garden when it is fine, and go to a cinematograph theatre when it is wet. Fortunately, we have had only one wet night so far. I have come to the conclusion that war would be a most delightful occupation, if it were not for the fighting. However we are still too far back for the Germans to worry us; though well within the

range of their artillery, apparently they don't think it worth their while to bother us. Consequently, we just carry on as if they did not exist. We eat and sleep and exercise the horses, etc., just as though it was peace. At nights we hear the battle going on in the distance; not that there is really much doing, but sometimes they let off machine guns, and there is generally a certain amount of artillery bombardment going on.

It is extraordinary how in this place, within four miles of the firing-line, the ordinary life goes on. Shops are open, factories still running, and good beer is brewed. This seems to be a great beer country. The owner of this house, who is still living here, is a brewer, and I should say a wealthy one. The annoying part of it is that the house has a bath and all modern conveniences; but unfortunately the water-works of the town are miles away behind the German lines, and so we have to fall back on the homely pump.

This afternoon I had my first experience of asphyxiating gas. There was a demonstration for us to try our respirators and gas helmets. All the generals and bigwigs turned up in force and went into a trench, which was kept filled with gas, with every conceivable form of respirator on. I got myself a nasty cough in the interests of science; but it is going off now. I should dislike to be "gassed" exceedingly.

There is a great institution here rigged up in a brewery. Men coming back from the trenches have a fine hot bath, and on coming out are given clean underclothing, leaving their dirty shirts behind, which are washed and then passed on to some one else in their turn.

I am told they keep a "chamber of horrors," in which some of the shirts straight from the trenches are exhibited, safely shut up in glass cases.

I am gradually getting all my men pushed through these baths, so that when they do get to work they will go in clean underclothing.

We do not have much work now. Just two telephone wires to work, and a few messages to be sent out on cycles.

June 11th, 1915.

Many thanks for your letter.

I am very sorry to hear about Eric, as I should like to have looked him up. However, it is a good thing he has fallen into the hands of the Saxons, and not the Prussians. Since I wrote

to you last night nothing special has happened. There is really very little to do just now; so I shall probably write a good deal. We hear the guns firing, and British troops are as thick as peas; but otherwise we might not be at war at all.

Letters seem to take rather a long time to get from me to you, and yours to me take three days.

Just now we hear quite a lot of distant rifle-fire.

Well, there is really nothing else to tell you. The weather is fine and I am glad to say not so hot, and everything goes well.

Your loving son,
Cecil.

June 12th, 1915.

Dear Bertie,—I have told most of my doings in a letter to Mother, but I did not tell about one incident, our gas demonstration, as I thought it might be censored. However, as all the others tell me they have written it in their letters, I may as well do so now.

We were told there was to be a great demonstration of asphyxiating gas for the benefit of the officers of the 12th Division at a place some miles back. Everybody was to go who could find some means of transporting himself there; so I went on a horse with the Brigade Major and our Parson. When we got there we found all the "knuts" in attendance, including our Divisional General and a Territorial Captain, who was evidently an expert on the subject and was to give the demonstration. First we had a demonstration of how to put on various kinds of smoke helmets and respirators. It was great fun seeing all these generals and people stuffing great wads of cotton waste into their mouths, soaked in a loathsome decoction of hypo and other chemicals. Then a beautifully uniformed French interpreter came up and introduced a French Chemistry Professor and sundry other big-wigs, also in beautiful blue uniforms, to give a demonstration of some apparatus which they use in mines.

The General "did the heavy" in great style, spoke French and was much interested. The apparatus consisted of a thing which you strapped on your mouth with a long rubber tube, with a pot, containing chemicals, on the end. There was a dear little pair of tongs to pinch your nose, and the whole thing rather reminded one of an elephant's trunk. This was put on a portly gentleman who said, "Maintenant je descendrai dans le gaz." Close by there was a trench, which was filled with gas which

they squirted out of a big cylinder. Well, he duly descended, but very soon climbed out again shaking his head and coughing. Apparently the solution was not correct, and so more solution was procured and the apparatus again put on. Then the most horrible gurgling sounds came out of the pot, and the victim who was wearing the gear was obviously in difficulties. Many willing hands hastily came to the rescue and helped to take off the thing. It appeared that this time the pot had been filled too full; and, as the only way in which he could breathe was through the rubber mouthpiece which was tightly strapped on, and his nose was tightly pinched by the aforesaid tongs, he had sucked up a lot of the solution through the rubber tube. After this, the apparatus was laid aside and was not tried again.

It was a most awful fiasco, and I felt very sorry for the Frenchman. One of the funniest things was that nobody dared to laugh and, for a wonder, everybody kept a perfectly straight face and looked on very solemnly. It was quite one of the comicalest turns I have seen for a long time.

I went into the trench to try a respirator belonging to my Brigadier. He said he had tried it, but, judging from the stink, it could not be a good one. However, as I was such a fine strong young fellow, I had better try and see if it was any good. So I went into the trench and got a good deal more gas than I bargained for.

It was certainly not a good respirator, and the gas gave me a beastly headache for the rest of the evening. I should not like to run up against a gas attack at all.

Otherwise nothing special has happened. We do not get very much work yet. Next week we are going to be attached to another brigade, for instruction actually in the trenches.

Your affectionate brother,
Cecil.

June 15th, 1915.

Dear Mother,—We are now undergoing a week's instruction with a Territorial Brigade.

Since I wrote last, several things have happened. Last Saturday I met General Campbell in the street near our Divisional Headquarters. He told me all about Eric. Apparently he was quite close to here, and the Saxons who captured him shouted back to say he was not badly wounded; so I hope he may be alright.

On Monday we came out here, and have been attached to this Territorial Brigade since then. It is a great score seeing things for a bit without having any responsibility. Curiously enough, poor Poulton belonged to this Brigade, and is buried quite close to here. The Signal Sergeant with whom I was out the other night said his loss was very much felt here. I am in a comfortable billet, some miles back from the firing-line. This morning I went up to have a look round the trenches. They vary a lot; but some of them have been made quite comfortable with good big dug-outs.

For the last two nights I have been out late, watching a trench being dug in which to bury cable. Most of the work has to be done at night, as it is in view of the enemy, and they are apt to drop shells if they see people walking about. At night the Germans have a regular firework display of magnesium lights, which they send up with a sort of pistol. You can see this going on all along the line; but we are too far back for them to be able to see us by the light.

I had a letter from Campbell and Willie the other day; the latter is still at Diss in Norfolk and is getting very tired of it.

I have not received any parcels yet, except a tin of ginger biscuits from Nelly which were much appreciated. I shall be writing to her soon. I am afraid the other parcels must have lost themselves somewhere.

Your loving son,
Cecil.

June 18th, 1915.

Dear Nelly,—Many thanks for the Bible, also your letter and the biscuits, which are much appreciated by all around. I have plenty of time to read now, as we are attached to another Brigade for instruction, and I really have very little to do. The inaction is making us very lazy, I am afraid, as the place we are in is very relaxing.

We are getting rather bored, and everybody seems to go to sleep after lunch as a habit. As a matter of fact, I am writing this instead; but all the others have gone to bed. I shall not be sorry now when we get properly settled down on our own, with our own bit of the line.

Near here there is rather a fine wood, with lots of honeysuckle and glowworms in it. Lots of men live in it in huts, and it looks very pretty at night, with all the men sitting in groups amongst

the undergrowth, with lots of candles burning. Some of it reminded me much more of a scene in *As you like it* than of war. Then, about a mile beyond the wood on the other side of a hill, are the trenches. From there we get a regular firework display at night. The Germans let off things like Roman candle-stars, which they shoot out of a sort of pistol and which illuminate the whole place brilliantly.

Now I think perhaps I had better go to sleep after all.

Give my love to Alfred and John.

Your loving brother,
Cecil.

June 18th, 1915.

Dear Mother,—I have now been attached to this Brigade for nearly a week, and I must say that this is a most absurd war. That two sets of otherwise sensible people should solemnly sit opposite one another in uncomfortable trenches simply looking at each other for month after month, is a grave reflection on the intelligence of the human race. However, meanwhile we are here and getting rather bored with having nothing to do.

I have been up into these trenches, and some of them have been made quite fairly comfortable with nice large dug-outs.

Most of the work is done at night, when they fire at parties repairing the trenches and putting up barbed wire entanglements.

I am comfortably billeted in a small farmhouse.

We leave here to-morrow and go back to the billets in the town about three miles away.

Many thanks for your two letters, which arrived yesterday. I also heard from Nelly.

Otherwise there is nothing to report on this section of the line.

P.S. My cough only lasted one afternoon.

I have not received any of the parcels yet, except one from Nelly, but they may still come.

P.P.S. Joy! The parcels have just arrived, and the chocolates are nearly gone already. Tobacco and cigarettes are a great score; in fact, it all cheers me up no end. They are great things, these "sendings." We are just going to have the cake for tea.

I like the *Illustrated* very much and should also like *Punch* sometimes; I miss not seeing it. Also, I should like two or three books to read, as, even when we get properly settled down,

I can see there will be a good deal of time on my hands with this trench warfare.

June 21st, 1915.

Many thanks for your letter. The coat has arrived and is a great joy. I really did want a new coat very badly, as I was getting very shabby.

I wonder whether you get all the letters I write. I write at least twice a week, and sometimes more; but from your letters I gather they do not all turn up.

Well, I am fit and back in billets in this rather slummy town, after having a week in the country.

You need have no fear for my safety, as I am sitting quite unheroically, miles back from the firing-line, but can hear the musketry out of my bedroom window at night.

It is extraordinary, the way the country people here carry on, just as if there was no war. Near where we were there was a village which was supposed to be unsafe for troops, as it is often shelled; but the children were playing and the women gossiping just as if nothing was on at all. Really, this is a most uninteresting war, and there is nothing much to tell you. We are having glorious weather and are comfortably housed in our *château*. The food is good, also the drinks. I have a comfortable amount of work to do, not too much. On the front all is quiet, as you no doubt read in the papers, except for occasional half hours' hate when they shoot off a few guns.

I had a letter from Bertie yesterday. He seems to be having a great time flying. I have got over my wish that I had joined the R.F.C., and am quite content to vegetate here for a bit, till we take on our bit of the line.

The country here is dull on the whole; but where we were attached there was a beautiful wood, in which many troops lived in huts and dug-outs, within a mile or so of the firing-line. It was most beautiful at night, this wood. There are lots of glowworms and honeysuckle, and in the parts where the men live you see their candles dotted about amongst the undergrowth, just like the fairy lights we used to have in the garden at home when we had a dance. It is very picturesque.

We have had a most beautiful day to-day, finishing up with a very fine sunset, and the Huns had the decency not to spoil it by making war; in fact, you might think peace had been declared, as there is not a sound on the front.

This evening I went and had a look at the canal barges on the river here. They are really very fine, and look so nice and clean. They appear to have very fine cabins, almost like a yacht, with lace curtains at the little windows and shutters. It is really much more impossible to realize that there is a war going on here than it is in England. However, I don't suppose this excessive slackness will go on much longer.

Now about things to send. As I said, the coat is a great success and is much admired. They all say I am quite the knut now. This evening the tin of peaches extracted some praise from our otherwise very critical mess. Also, the cake and chocolates were a great draw. Next time, it will do splendidly if you send me just cake and chocolates and another tin of fruit. We have plenty of potted meat and other things, also there is a sort of personal touch in cake and chocolates which I like very much.

Give my love to all at home.

June 24th, 1915.

Many thanks for your letter and the photos, which are excellent.

This is just to say we are still in the same old place, and apparently are not going to fight just yet; otherwise there is nothing to report.

The censor's stamp does not mean that all my letters get read, but merely that we are rather proud of our censor's stamp and like playing with it; so somebody has just leant over my shoulder and stamped this and various other things. I shan't be sorry when we get over this bit of the line and get settled down, as it is really difficult to find enough for the men to do here, and they are apt to get slack.

If I come across Colonel T., X Brigade, I will look him up; but it is impossible to go hunting for people unless they are close by.

By the way, if I have over £50 balance at the Bank, I shall send you a cheque for that amount to invest in war loan. That must be quite the best investment going now. I am writing up to inquire how much I have got. It should be quite a lot now, as I spend next to nothing.

Meanwhile all is quiet here, and just now, at 10 P.M., not a shot is being fired.

Your loving son,
Cecil.

June 25th, 1915.

Dear Nelly,—I am sure it is high time I wrote to you again. I am doing very well in the letter line now; I average quite two a day, which is about a record for me.

Well, we are still in this smelly old town. It is extraordinary how the French population lives and flourishes exceedingly in an atmosphere of shells and smells. The shells, no doubt, they get used to and are now quite unimportant; but the absence of drains is what strikes one most at every turn.

As a matter of fact, there has been very little shelling done on either side lately, and hours pass without our hearing a sound of the war. To-day one of my men brought me a bit of newspaper which he was just going to use to wrap some food up in. On it was written an account of poor Eric's exploits. It was the first I had seen of it in the papers; but it said he had been doing very well.

Well, there is nothing more to report, except that I am feeling very fit.

Mother sent me two very good photos of you and John.

With much love to you and Alfred from

Cecil.

June 25th, 1915.

Dear Bertie,—Can you get me a pair of telephones like those one uses for receiving wireless? One used to be able to get them at Gamage's for about £2; but I doubt whether you can do it now. However, no doubt you can get me a pair of about 4000 ohms, or over, somewhere. I have tried to borrow a pair here for some experiments I want to carry out, but think it will be less trouble to get them sent out. I want them as soon as possible.

We are not in the trenches yet, as the other two Brigades go in first while we remain in reserve for a week or two. This is rather a score, as it means I shall have about a week in which to explore thoroughly the lines which I shall have to take over. Meanwhile, we are getting on very nicely here. I am kept quite busy, as I am carrying on the training of all the signallers in the four battalions of the Brigade.

As they are scattered over a considerable distance in their billets, I go a sort of tour round the lot of them on a push-bike every day. To-day has been an exception, as it has pelted with rain all day. I was going to say, the noise of the guns was

drowned by the thunder; but this would not be accurate, as they very rarely seem to fire guns now. I suppose each battery is allowed to fire off two or three rounds of "hate" per day.

Let's hear from you sometime, and send me the telephones as soon as you can. They need not be very high-class ones, and I do not want to spend more than £3 or £4 on them.

Your affectionate brother,

Cecil.

P.S. I would tell you all about the experiment[1]; but if it comes off, it will have to be secret, and so I could not write it in a letter.

June 26th, 1915.

Dear Nelly,—Many thanks for the books and cakes, both of which are very welcome. Especially the cakes received a great ovation. Bought cakes are never anything like as good as home-made ones, and I could detect the hand of Kate in the ones which I received to-day. Please give her my best love and thanks. I feel a most awful fraud, getting these luxuries. Probably you imagine me looking gaunt and dishevelled, living in a dug-out on bully beef and biscuits. As a matter of fact, we are still in our comfortable *château*, and are living like fighting-cocks.

The fighting is of a mild description. Sometimes we complain of a gun going off after lunch and so disturbing our afternoon siesta; but otherwise you would not suppose we were at war at all. Lately they even seem to have given up firing guns after lunch; so it looks as though our complaints must be felt to be reasonable.

Really, the above, though not strictly accurate, is only a slightly exaggerated account of the peace of our existence.

Well, there is really nothing else to tell you except that I am keeping very fit.

With much love to you and the family from

Cecil.

June 26th, 1915.

Dear Mother,—I forget when I wrote last to you; but I think it was last night.

[1] Lieut. Hanmer stated that those who succeeded Cecil got the benefit of most remarkable results, and according to this admirer Cecil should have received honour for this original work.

Anyway, nothing much has happened since I did write. We are still out of the trenches; but I expect we shall be going in in another week or so. They don't seem to like hurrying things over here. However, meanwhile we are quite happy here, and I shall be able to go and have a good look at all the telephone lines which I have to take over before we go there.

Well, there is really nothing else to tell you. I have got everything running fairly smoothly now, and I find plenty of work to do in training the battalion signallers.

We had a great thunderstorm this afternoon, which no doubt would have drowned the noise of the guns, except that both sides do very little firing at all now; so the thunderstorm had it all to itself.

Please can I have some more tobacco and a khaki tie. Also, I shall be wanting a new pair of riding-breeches soon.

Amongst my kit you will find an old pair which fit me quite well, you can get Sabberton to take measurements from them; I leave the choice of material to you. My pencil has just broken; so good-night, Mother.

June 26th, 1915.

The parcels from Fortnum and Mason and the books arrived to-day. I do enjoy getting the parcels. They really seem to bring home nearer than anything else. One thing about this war is that it really does make one appreciate letters and parcels from home.

Now as to details. The fact is, anything is welcome, as, if we do not eat it ourselves, I give it to the men. However, if I make one or two points, you will quite understand that I am not in any way "looking a gift horse in the mouth," but just suggesting future improvements. The only thing as a matter of fact that I have to suggest is about the cake: I think the one you sent me before from A. and N. was better. It came in a tin, and was a fine rich one like plumpudding, and was in great request. However, if I just get about the same amount every week I shall do splendidly. It is much appreciated by every one in the Mess. Also, thank you very much for the cigarettes. They are very good indeed.

Really, there is no justification for having all these luxuries, as we are simply living a most unwarlike and idle life in a comfortable *château*; but we do like them (the luxuries) very much. Some of the others are getting bored with not having enough to

do; so the books will come in very handy. I have found plenty of work to do, and am enjoying my job very much. You say, why can't I get some experimental work at Cambridge? Well, as a matter of fact I don't think I should like it if I had the chance, as I think this is a very good job out here, and it will be a most useful experience for me.

Well, again there is "nothing to report," except that I am very fit and quite happy.

With much love from
Cecil.

June 29th, 1915.

Dear Bertie,—Did you get a letter from me some days ago asking for wireless telephones? I hope you did, as I want them very much. You will have to make sure that they get through the post, as I am afraid they may hold them up. I can get many things out here, but I cannot get those. A pair of about 5000 ohms resistance will just do me nicely, but I must have them *soon.*

The divisional authorities seem quite keen about my experiments. I wish I could tell you what it was all about. I am still having quite a good time here. While I am settled down I am going to make some really good maps, showing all the wires which I have to take over when we go up into the trenches. I have found a place where we can get blue printing done, and have had some fine large-scale maps made of the part where we go to. It is very necessary to do this, as each new division as it comes along lays wires galore, till now the place is a regular cobweb.

The gunners are dreadful in this way. They seem to have an unlimited supply of wire and use it to confound the linesmen of the unfortunate Signal Company.

However, my map is really going to be a very fine show. Let me hear that you have sent off the wireless telephones.

Your affectionate brother,
R. C. Hopkinson.

June 30th, 1915.

Dear Mother,—I got the A. and N. parcels yesterday. What I do is, I just keep such as we want for ourselves and give the rest to the men. As a matter of fact, we really get all we want now and pay for it in our Mess bills. We get a box from Fort-

num every week. However, things like chocolate and preserved fruit and cakes, etc., are always acceptable. I don't think the weekly parcels are really necessary, I can really get everything I want out here in the way of necessaries; what I mean is, I like getting the parcels very much indeed, but there is really no need to arrange for a regular supply, as we are very well provided for. It is the sentiment which they carry that is the best part. Not that the external part is by any means to be despised either. The chocolates and crystallized fruits are a great "draw."

Books are also much wanted, and I think the men would like a small parcel of magazines. You see they have to sit for hours on end, listening at a telephone, and it is then that they want something to read.

After to-morrow we shall have a much more strenuous time, as we have to make arrangements to take over all the telephone wires in this part of the line, which we shall occupy. Fortunately we shall have plenty of time to do this and to find out all about it. You have no idea what an enormous amount of telephone wires there are scattered about the country here. Everybody who comes adds a few, till the place reminds one almost of a gigantic cobweb. This is a bit of exaggeration, but still they are very thick on the face of the earth.

Now it is just about time to go to bed, as I start work to-morrow.

July 5th, 1915.

Many thanks for your two letters and for the parcels. I think the weekly touch from Harrod's will just suit me splendidly. There is one thing which I should like to add, and that is a tin of refills for "Tommy's cooker."

I use these cookers a lot, as the telephone operators have to sit up all night, and I think they are more likely to keep awake if I let them make themselves coffee, etc.

I am afraid I have not written for some days; but I have really had quite a lot of work to do. My Brigade is in the trenches now, and so I am at it hard all day. My work takes me up into the trenches quite a lot now. This is only while things are quite quiet, as they are now. When there is anything of a show, my place is at the Brigade Headquarters, which is some distance back from the firing-line.

My work just now is very interesting, and I enjoy it very much. I have come to the conclusion that, so long as one's own

show goes well, war is a very fine thing. My show varies a good deal; just at present it is going well, and so I feel that I don't mind if the war lasts for several years. When things go wrong, however, I feel very differently.

Well, I will write you a more complete account when I have more time.

Please give my love to Alice and Fanny and thank them very much for the tie and cigarettes. I will write soon. I have received a most magnificent cake from Aunt Minnie. I shall also be writing to her soon.

Please tell Bertie I have received the telephones, which will be very useful, and I shall write to *him* soon.

July 10th, 1915.

It was great having my birthday-cake at tea this afternoon. I seem to be supplying the Mess with cakes and sweets just now, and they ask me if I could not arrange to have a birthday once a week. Our French interpreter also gave me a very good cake; so we have been in clover.

I am still enjoying the work very much, though of course it has its ups and downs. Things go on just as usual here. Nothing much doing as far as fighting is concerned, but plenty for me to do. Now it is really time to go to bed.

Please give my love to Nelly and thank her very much indeed for the cakes and the book. I will write to her when I get back to our reserve position.

By the way, one thing we should like very much is a small ham of the same sort we used to have at home, there are none better.

July 15th, 1915.

I am afraid you have not had a letter for some days; but you will get them more frequently in future.

There is nothing much to tell you. The other day we had a most interesting exhibition of Hun shelling at a nice safe distance. They were shelling a village about half a mile away, and they knocked a fresh hole in the tower of the already much battered Church.

It was really a great sight, as I think they put some quite big ones over. You could hear it coming, it sounded as though it was right overhead, then a great puff of smoke followed by a terrific bang. The extraordinary thing is that this has been

going on, on and off, for the last nine months, and yet the people live in the village and run into their cellars till it is over.

The other night both sides had a "hate," and many thousands of rounds of ammunition must have been shot off. Altogether there was a great to do, and they blew up a mine. The net result was one man killed! This shows what a lot it must take to do any real damage. I have got a lot of work to do now; but it is difficult to know exactly what to do first. However, we are getting on now.

Now it is time to go to bed.

I am very fit, and get plenty of exercise trotting round the trenches.

July 18th, 1915.

The ham arrived last night and is a great success. Very many thanks. We are indeed doing ourselves proud.

To-day I had occasion to go back to Divisional Headquarters, and accepted an invitation for lunch at the Mess of the Headquarters of the Artillery. However, I soon realized my mistake, as I only got cold beef and chutney and cold jam and rice. I don't know what they would say if they were offered that here. However, they had most excellent beer.

My impression is, we have far more luxuries here than further back. Probably, to see the real horrors of war in the way of feeding you have to go to G.H.Q., where General French lives.

There is still nothing to report. We are still in the same place, I am glad to say. It is much nicer to be in the same place than always moving. I had intended to bring the rest of my correspondence up to date this evening; but really I am too sleepy.

Please send me my sea-boots, as the trenches get very muddy when there is any rain; also will you please send me a pair of spiral puttees?

Best love to all.

Your loving son,
Cecil.

July 18th, 1915.

Dear Bertie,—Many thanks for the telephones. The experiments have not come to anything yet; but I still have hopes. As a matter of fact, I have not had time to do much for the last fortnight, as the ordinary work of fixing up new telephone arrangements and keeping the old lines in repair has taken all my time.

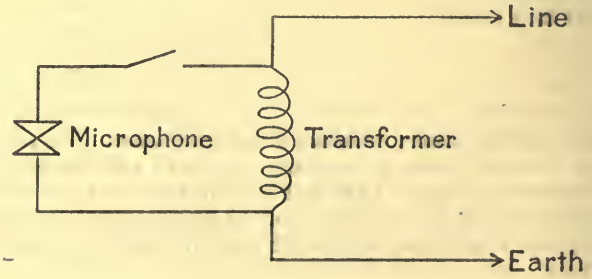
I enclose cheque for £5. Will you please hand over 30*s.* to Barker, as I am going to get some screws, etc., from him. Now that we are settled down, I can do a good deal in the way of making various devices such as switches, etc., which make things better.

At present, there is generally considerable blaspheming when the Brigade Major tries to speak down the telephones, as the speaking is sometimes faint and there is a lot of cross-talk. Also, the operators are not over-intelligent, some of them, and rather lose their heads when the Staff want to speak. Conversations generally start off with a chorus of "Hullos" and "Who are yous?" which lasts for two or three minutes till the right man gets on at the other end. Yesterday, we had to telephone through three signal offices from one battalion to the next battalion on the flank, which is in another Division, and so we had five people on the line all shouting "Hullo, are you there?" at the same time. However, it is all experience, and we are improving slowly.

We have an appalling number of wires to deal with; I have twenty coming into my signal office, and they all have to have alternative routes into dug-outs, etc. Before I have finished I shall have at least half a dozen more.

By the way, I forgot to tell you what I wanted to do with the rest of the £5. I want to get six telephone transformers. I believe they cost 2*s.* each at the G.E.C.

They simply consist of a coil of wire about twenty ohms' resistance; I can use ordinary hand telephones for speaking in orderly rooms and Brigade H.Q. office. If they don't know exactly what I want, here is a diagram of the way in which I propose to use them.



I hope all this does not worry you if you are busy; but I shall not be doing it often. The fact is I have plenty of skilled workmen at my disposal, but very little material to work on.

Well, everything is going well here, i.e. there is nothing doing on either side, except for an occasional "hate." In the last one we had, the Artillery of both sides hated one another for about an hour. We blew up a mine, and there was a tremendous row.

One thing more: can you get me some of that printing paper which prints in brown lines on white paper? I think they call it "Gallic" paper; I want it for maps. For anything else in this way I will write to Barker.

Your affectionate brother,
R. C. Hopkinson.

July 24th, 1915.

Dear Mother,—Many thanks for your P.C.'s and letters. Didn't I tell you the riding-breeches had turned up and are a great success? I think I must have said so about four weeks ago, when they came. The ham has gone where the good hams go, and was also a great success. It really was very good indeed, and finished its career, soon after it arrived, as an excellent ham-omelet, having previously done yeoman service at breakfast and lunch. Everything is still quite quiet here, and I live in hopes that I shall really be able to set my house in order as far as telephones are concerned, before the Germans get back from Warsaw. It is an endless task getting one's house in order; as soon as one job is finished another equally urgent crops up.

I was very pleased to see that Bertie had got that appointment on the Inventions Board. He seems to be going strong.

I get my days kept quite full now, in one way or another. It is now 11.5 P.M., and I shall be up in the trenches at 6.30 to-morrow morning. However, I shrewdly suspect I shall find time for a good loaf to-morrow afternoon.

July 25th, 1915.

Many thanks for your letters and parcels. I think weekly orders had better stop for a bit, as we are really getting overwhelmed with cakes and chocolates, and have several weeks' supply in hand I should think. I will let you know when we want some more. Also, I generally do not get in to tea these days, so I don't know what becomes of them. The cigars are excellent, and I enjoy one very much in the evening.

I am really quite hard at work now. Yesterday was a typical day.

I started off with the Brigade Major at about 7 A.M. We arrived at a Battalion Headquarters in a log hut in a wood about 7.30 A.M. Then I went on and spoke words of wisdom to the sergeant of this Battalion, as I found that he had left undone certain things which he ought to have done. Then along the trenches and out along a communication trench to another Battalion Headquarters, where I met another Signal sergeant. Then I went with him to find a good route for his telephone wires. We went along the trenches which his Battalion occupy, and so back to Battalion Headquarters by a hitherto unexplored way, thus discovering an excellent route for our telephone wires. Then I got back to Brigade Headquarters about 1.30 P.M., and I must have drunk about a quart of beer at lunch, as it was very hot and the trenches always get pretty stuffy on a hot day. The afternoon I spent in doing various things about Brigade Headquarters. Then, finally, after dinner I have to decide on a programme of work for the next day, and so to bed about 11 P.M. The other night we had a "hate." All our guns started firing and making a great noise. However, the Germans did not reply very heavily. Now I shall have a drink and go to bed.

By the way I would invest in war loan, but find I have only got about £15 in the Bank; so it is hardly worth while. Many thanks for writing out those letters. I will send them off.

July 28th, 1915.

I am having a strenuous time just now. I have large working-parties of infantry, generally about seventy men at a time, working for me, digging ditches for cables. They start at 6 A.M.; so I have to be there then and, what with one thing and another, I don't generally get to bed much before 11 P.M. Consequently I was very sleepy to-day, especially as this is rather a relaxing place sometimes. This evening however I got back in time for tea and went to lie on my bed for ten minutes to read some letters, with the result that I dropped off to sleep till I was wakened at 8 P.M., in time for dinner.

I have no news to give you. I see no reason why the war should ever finish at the present rate, and, as I consider I have got a good job, I don't much mind if it does go on for a little more. This sounds very bad and is not for general publication.

However, I expect I shall be getting pretty sick of it before long. They had a great battle between two aeroplanes above here yesterday. I did not see it; but I heard it was most exciting. They fired at one another with machine-guns, a most dangerous practice for the people down below, as of course all the bullets have to go somewhere. I believe our aeroplane won.

On second thoughts, I retract my statement that I don't mind if the war goes on for a bit. It is not much of a game up in the trenches, and I have a much better time back here. Well, now I really must go to bed.

I hope they will start giving leave in about another six weeks' time. They say we are supposed to get it after we have been out for three or four months, but I don't know if this is really so.

P.S. I should like some more books or magazines for the men.

July 30th, 1915.

I am much looking forward to the appearance of the ham. Just at present life is rather a bore. I get working-parties of infantry, and they dig ditches for me in which I put cable. Meanwhile, I have to contrive to keep my own people busy on other jobs.

I had a letter from Willie the other day. He has got a job out here, and is coming out shortly. He had some experimental job which would be very nice.

It is great to see how well Bertie is getting on. I shall write him a letter soon, in the hopes of getting a reply.

I see Roger Pollard from time to time up in the trenches. When I last saw him, he was thoroughly fed up. They all seem to get pretty sick of the trenches after being there for a bit. It certainly is not much of a life sitting in a trench and watching the sandbags opposite you through a periscope, occasionally having a few bombs thrown at you by way of a change. Well, there is nothing else to report.

August 2nd, 1915.

Many thanks for the excellent ham, which turned up to-day. These hams are a great success and seem to stand the journey very well. How the time goes! We have been out more than two months now, and everybody seems to be labouring under the happy delusion that they will be going on leave in another month's time, though I expect most of us will have to wait more like six months. I believe, leave is supposed to start after we

have been out three months; but I expect they will only let very few go at one time. Things are still going on much the same. Everything gets done much slower than one hopes; but I suppose that is always sure to be the case.

This place gets very relaxing in hot weather, and I could set up a fine record in sleeping here, if I got half a chance.

I had another excellent cake to-day from Aunt Minnie. To-day they lobbed a few big shells into a neighbouring village, I suppose this was in reply to a "hate" our guns had last night. In another couple of days we have the anniversary of the war; so I suppose there will be some sort of a show then. I am afraid my letters are very dull, but there is really nothing to tell you. I just go worrying round on all sorts of jobs for laying out new telephone wires, etc., which would not interest you at all.

I finished on the last page; but that really seemed too short for anything, so I must see if I can't scrape together some more news.

The night before last they had a big battle; but it was some distance away. However, the whole house shook with the big guns going off, though they must have been fifteen miles away. Probably you will get to know much more about it from the papers than I can tell you. By the way, we had some war correspondents and journalists round yesterday to see the sights of the place and smell its many varieties of smells—the latter are awful in some places, as this ground has been fought over and occupied for about nine months now, and so they come across some horrid things when digging new trenches.

Well, now it is really time to go to bed, as I shall have a long day to-morrow.

Your loving son,
Cecil.

August 6th, 1915.

Dear Bertie,—Many thanks for your letters. I think, as a matter of fact, three telephone transformers will be as many as I can find telephones for, and I have managed to pinch one transformer from our workshops at Divisional Headquarters. My job is still very interesting, and I don't think I really want to change; at all events I would not agitate for a shift without getting further particulars of the other job. I shall be writing to Willie to-night. My experiments led to nothing, except that certain suggestions of mine led to the publishing of an Army

Order as to the laying of telephone cables in the trenches; which is something. I will ask my C.O. when I see him next whether I can't write and tell you all about it. As a matter of fact, I was rather put off experimenting for some time, as a friend of mine got shot while doing a job in connection with the experiments. I have got a lot of wires out now, and shall have more before long. I have even got to the luxury of having separate wires carried on poles with nice little ohms' insulators, reserved for when the Brigade Staff wishes to speak to Battalions. The only trouble about these is, they are very liable to get cut by shell-fire. All the other wires which we just use for buzzer work go along ditches. There used to be fearful grousing about the badness of my telephone service. They get very annoyed with the cross-talk, or when some wretched operator chimes in on their conversation with his buzzer. However, I have not heard so much of it lately.

At present I am kept very busy burying cable up in the trenches, to keep it out of the way of shell-fire. To do this, I have infantry working-parties to do the digging for me. My Brigade is very good about working-parties, and I can always get as many men as I want, with the result that I am long way ahead of the other Brigades in the Division as regards buried cable. Sometimes it is very strenuous, as the working-parties often start at 6 A.M., and I can't get to bed much before 10.30 P.M. as a rule.

Well, now I must go to bed, as I have a 6 o'clock touch tomorrow.

The bomb-dropping sounds great fun. Can't you manage to pay a flying visit out here on some pretext or the other? I would show you the sights of the place, and perhaps you could arrange to have some aerial "stunts" done for our benefit.

Your affectionate brother,
R. C. Hopkinson.

August 6th, 1915.

My Dear Mother,—I forget when I last wrote; but it must be some days ago now.

Things are still quite quiet here, and I hope they will continue to be so for some time to come, so that I can "consolidate my position" properly as regards my telephone wires.

Many thanks for your letter and list of horse comforts. As a matter of fact, my horses are about two miles back from here

now and I have not seen them for some time. However, I hear they are flourishing. I am still very busy burying telephone cable up in the trenches, so that it will not get cut by the shell-fire. I am glad to say I am getting on with it a good deal faster than the other Brigades.

Yesterday I had a letter from Bertie. He seems to be getting on very well. I wish he could pay a flying visit out here. Well, again there is nothing further to report. The ham vanishes at a great pace and is much appreciated.

I keep very fit now, as I get a lot of exercise going to and fro from the trenches, and sometimes I do a bit of digging when I get the time.

P.S. I get no time for reading now, so I think it is hardly worth while sending me any books just yet.

August 12th, 1915.

Dear Mother,—Many thanks for the parcel of books, which will please the men very much.

I have written to Willie to say I should like the job very much, but I don't quite know how to go about getting it. As a matter of fact, I am still quite happy here, though I get rather fed up at times with it.

I keep very fit in spite of the smells. In fact, it is really surprising how well people keep in spite of bad water, mosquitoes, and all the other minor horrors of war. I think it must be largely due to the fact that everybody is inoculated.

As usual in my letters, there is nothing to report. There was a bit of a "beano" the other night, when some trenches were retaken some distance from here, as you no doubt read in the papers. We all turned out about 2 A.M. and strolled about in pyjamas listening to the guns. However, they did not worry this Brigade at all beyond just waking us up.

Curiously enough, this is just exactly the place Campbell was in last year, and there are a number of graves belonging to his regiment hereabouts. Of course, they had some fierce fighting here.

The doctor of one of the Battalions in this Brigade was also in Campbell's regiment. He got buried in an explosion of a shell or a mine, which deranged his nerves badly. He was then sent home for a rest-cure, and went down to Shorncliffe to see some specialist. However, when he reported to the Army Medical authorities, instead of handing him over to the au-

thorities, they gave him a job as M.O. of one of our Battalions. This job he has had ever since, and is now back in the same place where he was before he had his accident.

Well, now I must close. I would write more, if there was anything to tell you.

August 17th, 1915.

Dear Mother,—I wrote to Willy about a week ago, saying I should like the job very much if I got the chance; but I don't think it is at all likely that I should be allowed to leave this job. However, if the other job comes my way, I shall take it. As a matter of fact I still like my present job very much, though I get very fed up at times. The work is hard as a rule; we are still busy burying telephone cables, and are likely to be for some weeks to come. I have parties of fifty to a hundred infantry digging for me every day, and I hope to get some civilian labour before long.

The men very much appreciated the books you sent me. They were very short of reading matter, but now we have plenty.

To-day I am having more or less of a holiday, as there are no working-parties for me to look after; so I am having a good loaf, which I enjoy very much. Still, there is nothing to report of this most uninteresting of wars. Our Division is working very hard improving this bit of the line, and I think we are going to make a good job of it.

One good thing about my present job is that I like all the people I am with very much. You ask whether I have seen any fighting yet. The nearest approach I have had is to hear it going on about ten miles away, and it was quite enough for my taste. I have not even seen any Germans yet, though the other day I saw the ends of some planks which they were carrying up into their trenches. You can imagine it is not a very thrilling war. All you can see of the enemy is the sandbags in front of their trenches. However there must be some more Germans there, as they have just been dropping shells into a village about half a mile away and disturbing me while writing this letter.

We get newspapers quite regularly. In fact, we used to get *The Times* in the evening of the same day on which it was published, but we don't do that now. However we get them regularly by post the following day.

There are still rumours that leave is going to start soon; but

I don't know whether I shall come in for it. I am longing to get home for a few days now.

Did you get the outline of my foot for a new pair of boots?

I should like a few cigars again, as I always get one every evening from the Staff Captain, and so I ought to give him some. The ones you sent before were very good.

Well, now I must close.

August 20th, 1915.

I am taking a morning off, so have time to write many letters. My work has been much held up lately by the bad weather. I was getting on quite well when we had about three days of violent thunderstorms. The trenches got all full of water and I shall not be able to carry on with my work in them for another three days. The trenches get into a perfectly awful state. The dug-outs where the men sleep get about six inches of water in some of them, and the communication trenches up which the rations have to come had about two feet six inches of water and mud in them. However, the men seemed to be quite cheerful and laughed like anything when I took my sea-boots off to pour the water out of them. Fortunately it was quite warm, and so it was not really so bad as it sounds.

Meanwhile, I am carrying on with the work of burying the cable further back from the trenches. I get Belgians to work for me on piece-work, and am filled with admiration at their prowess as diggers. They really are remarkably hard workers. I hope none of them are spies.

On the whole, I still enjoy myself, but should like a holiday. At times I get rather fed up, but as long as my job continues to be as interesting as it is at present, I shall be quite content to carry on with it. At all events I shall always be glad to have had some experience of the Front. If I do get the job with Willy, it will not be because of any active dislike of my present job, but because I think probably his job will be a better one. With these war jobs it appears a matter of luck whether you get on to something good or not. You see, for a time I was annoyed I did not get the wireless job, but it was a good thing I did not, as it all ended in nothing and they none of them got their £1 a day after all. I have always congratulated myself that I did not go motor-biking. So now I have come to the conclusion that it is as well to leave oneself in the hands of fate, unless you get a very certain lead.

Signalling appears to be about as good a job as there is going out here. Sometimes I say, I shall come back here after the war is over and set up a record in the sleep line; but I don't know that I should really like to be here unless I had plenty of work to do. That is why I do not like the idea of being here all the winter, as if we sit tight, as apparently we intend to, there will be next to nothing for me to do, and this must be a most depressing place in winter. I can quite appreciate Campbell's feelings about it.

Rumours of leave have been floating about; but there has been nothing official about it. Yesterday I had another excellent ham, for which many thanks. These hams are really splendid and are about the best parcel we get. Where do you get them from? Many thanks for socks and stationery.

With much love from

Cecil.

August 26th, 1915.

Dear Mother,—I am afraid I have not written to you for some time; but I have really had quite a strenuous week. Up at 4.30 A.M. nearly every morning and at it continuously till 8 P.M. So I have not had much time for letter-writing. This evening I have had an excellent mail. One from you, one from Campbell and one from Willy.

Willy says he had fixed up his party about a fortnight before he received my letter. I should not like to leave this job till I have fixed things up here, which will not be for another fortnight or so. Things are much the same here. Yesterday a shell came a bit nearer than usual; a fragment of it actually broke a tile on the roof. This is the nearest we have had so far; so you see things are not what you might call thrilling. Campbell's letter is all about this part of the world. He was in this part of the line for four months.

Well, I think this is all this time, and I am very sleepy.

September 4th, 1915.

Many thanks for your letter. They say in the papers we are having a lull before the storm here, in which case I wish the storm would hurry up, as I am getting tired of this place. I am afraid I don't see any prospect of getting home yet, as I am still kept busy here, there being a lot of work still to do. In fact, the more I do the more there seems to be which ought to

be done; so there is no end to it. We have had a lot of rain lately, which makes this place in rather a beastly state. It is worse than Cambridge for mud. I will write you a longer letter soon, when I have more time.

I am afraid this is not much of a letter; but I am quite fit, though very full of many worries just at present. However, it will all be all right soon, no doubt.

September 6th, 1915.

I was rather fed up when I wrote last, and so am writing again now, being more cheerful now.

The other day I went up to an artillery observing-station, from which I got a grand view of the German lines and the land behind them. It was an old ruined house, with telescopes conveniently rigged up to look through holes in the wall, and a dug-out alongside to go into when the place gets shelled.

I had tea in the dug-out with the battery commander; and then we went up into the observing-station, and he had a "shoot" at a farm some distance behind the German lines for my benefit. The whole thing is worked by a telephone to the battery, which is about a mile back (B battery I should say consists of four field-guns). Well, he telephoned back "stand to," which meant that all the men at the battery had to run and stand to their guns. After about half a minute, word came through that all the guns were manned. Then he telephoned back that all guns were to lay on target No. 9, which was the farm at which he was going to shoot. In another half minute he telephoned back "No. 1 fire." The men at the battery then said "No. 1 fires," and a quarter of a minute later you could hear the gun fire, and see the shell burst right on top of the farm. Then he sent back the order for each gun to fire in turn, which they did, and you could see each shell burst in turn.

I got as far as the middle of the last sentence last night, when I was called away to look after something in connection with my telephone wires, and so the thread is rather broken.

After attending to my wires, I had a long discussion on the engineering trade with the operators on duty, one of whom was a fitter and another an electrician. I like having a talk about something with no connection whatever with the war sometimes.

I suggested the possibility of leave to my C.O. the other day; but he said that it could only be granted if I had urgent family affairs, such as getting married or something of that sort.

Do you think you could fix up with some girl for me? Anybody would do, and I should probably get a week. However, perhaps it would be better not, as it would be an awful nuisance getting married when all one wants is peace and quiet.

The papers you send are much appreciated. I think it is hardly worth while sending a grouse; thanks very much all the same.

Well, now I must go to bed.

September 12th, 1915.

I have been having a much slacker time the last two days, and we are having glorious weather now. However, I expect to have plenty to do this next week.

Things are still very quiet, though we had a great "hate" the other day and made a nasty mess of part of the German trenches. It was quite a big show for our part of the line, and lots of generals and people went up to the trenches to see the fun.

I wrote a letter to Campbell the other day, telling him all about this place. You know he was here for four months before he came home.

Have you found out where Wilfred is? I had a letter from Miley the other day. He is quite close by here, and I tried to get on to him on the telephone, but failed. It is very difficult to find people out here, unless they are in the same Division.

When do people in England think war will be over? Are they still as optimistic as usual? I don't see why it shouldn't go on for years and years, personally. I have not heard from Willy out here yet. Has he come out yet? Well, I am keeping quite fit, and as usual there is nothing of interest to tell you. The reason why I have been slack lately is, not so much that there is not so much work to do, but what work I have been doing has not required my personal attention.

By the way, did you send me shortbread and Edinburgh rock some time ago? If so, thank you very much. The last of the Edinburgh rock did its duty just a day or two ago. The cigars have arrived and are excellent.

Our Parson, who is quite an estimable fellow, though he looks upon me as a brand to be snatched from the burning, is starting a soldiers' club, and is making an appeal for games. Will you please get me one or two cheap draughts sets, etc.?

September 17th, 1915.

This is just a line to tell you I am still going on all right. Apparently, I get my leave October 12th–18th, which is a long time to wait; but still it can't be helped.

Things are going on much as usual here. We have fine weather, which is a good thing, and glorious sunsets, which would be good if only one had time to sit down and appreciate them. Life is too much of a rush.

I have not heard from Willy for about a month now, but I suppose he is still going strong. I am looking forward to seeing him.

The day before yesterday I went to meet Miley. He took me to tea at his battery, and I saw his guns shoot. Then we went for a stroll round his bit of trenches, and we met Law, whom I daresay you remember up in Newcastle. His trenches were much the same as ours; but their telephone arrangements were not so good as ours, which was encouraging.

I believe Wilfred is knocking round here somewhere attached to a neighbouring Division; but it is very difficult to get into touch with people, unless they are quite close by.

Well, I shall live from now for the 12th October.

Your loving son,
Cecil.

P.S. Can I have the games for the soldiers' club soon?

September 23rd, 1915.

Dear Mother,—Things are going on much as usual here, except that I think both sides have been a bit more lively lately. All the talk at present is about leave and rumours of the possibility of a move. I am always being asked if I have heard any rumour from Brigade Headquarters; but I very seldom have. Most of the rumours seem to come from the trenches instead of the back. They live on rumours there, never having any authentic information to go on.

We have had most glorious weather up to date, but just to-night it has come on to pelt with rain. Rain is a much worse enemy than the Germans, I think. Well, this is rather a depressing letter, I am afraid; so I will see if I can't tell you something more cheerful. Well, the prospect of leave on the 12th is the most cheering thing at present.

October 7th, 1915.

At last I have a little peace and will take the opportunity of writing to you. I don't know when I last wrote, but will start off when we left our last position.

Well, we were told in the morning the Brigade would be relieved that night.

It was a tremendous uprooting as we had been there three months and had accumulated a lot of stuff, so that the wagons were overloaded. However we managed to get the bulk of our stuff on somehow, and pushed off at 11 P.M. that night. We arrived in a billet in a village about ten miles back at about 4 A.M., after various adventures with the wagons and cycles getting stuck in the mud. The general impression seemed to be that we were going to have a week or two of rest, which would have suited us very well, as it was quite a good place to be in. Meanwhile the attack was progressing somewhere a long way off, and we were not expecting our turn to come for a long time. However, that night we were told we had to move on the next day, and we were to go in motor busses. The next morning, 150 motor busses came to take the Brigade on its next move. This was quite good fun and gave the men a bit of a rest. We bussed for about twenty-five miles, passing a lot of Indian troops, and took up another billet in a nice village for that night. The next day, we marched on another ten miles and then waited by the side of the road, while billets were being found for us in the next town. I wrote you a letter there, but I don't know whether it ever went off. Our move into billets that night was an awful confusion. There were not nearly enough billets, and the inhabitants were very inhospitable. However, we packed in somehow, and I got about two hours' sleep, and then rode off early in the morning to see the trenches we were to take over. It was an awful change after our last place. The ground had only just been taken from the Germans and the whole place was still scattered with dead. I never saw anything like it. A modern battlefield is a horrible place.

The trenches were simply those which the attacking troops had dug, and were little more than a scratch in the ground. What we used to call a "hate" was going on nearly all the time, with an occasional pause of an hour or so. Our Headquarters however were fairly comfortable, having been an old German battery position which they had evidently left in a hurry. They had made themselves very comfortable indeed, with two

palatial dug-outs, such as we should never dream of making. They had left quite a lot of literature and music behind, and altogether there was plenty of "loot" knocking around, by which we duly benefited. Well, we moved in that night and stayed there six days, and now we are very glad to be in comfortable quarters again. We had a very strenuous time there, as most of the work on telephones had to be done at night; so we got very little sleep. My men were in very cramped quarters in a cellar and dug-outs, but they worked very well indeed. The men in the trenches of course had a much worse time of it. They were out in the open all the time and were being shelled continually. However, it all came to an end in time, and now we are back in good billets in a *château* waiting for another move.

I am afraid all leave is off for the present, and I don't see any prospect of getting it for some time to come.

Give my love to Nelly.

October 17th, 1915.

Our Headquarters are right up in the trenches now, not in the front but in a communication trench at the back. It is about a two mile walk up to the front line, along trenches the whole way.

When I last wrote, I believe we had just come out of the trenches and were "resting" at the back. Our rest, however, was rather of a disturbed nature, as we had four eight inch guns in our back garden, which nearly shook the house down when they fired. Also, there was a terrific bombardment one day. Personally, I was quite glad to get back to the trenches.

We have had a strenuous time the last four days. We came in one night, shifted our Headquarters the next morning, had a battle that afternoon and night, and just settled down again up here the day before yesterday. I got very little sleep during those days before the battle. After the battle I went up at night into the trenches to try to get lamp communication, and everything seemed like a horrid nightmare—finding one's way up a tangle of trenches, most of them blocked with the wounded being carried back and men carrying bombs and ammunition up to the front line. This is chalk country and the trenches looked very weird in the light of the flares which they send up. I am afraid our Brigade had a lot of casualties and I lost several friends; amongst others Roger Pollard was killed, whom I dare-

say you remember. My part of the show worked quite well on the whole. We have very cramped quarters here, as there are not enough dug-outs, and the men find it very difficult to get enough sleep.

I live in a dug-out with the Brigade Major and the Machine Gun Officer, and the General lives in another dug-out; so everything is very primitive. We have to carry all our water up some distance, and washing and shaving are not considered necessary, though lately we have been doing a little more in this line.

Well, now I really can't keep awake any longer. I keep very fit all the time.

Your loving son,

Cecil.

P.S. I believe we may be going back to rest soon; so perhaps my leave may come off before long.

October 28th, 1915.

Dear Mother,—We are now back in the dear old trenches and having the most appalling weather. However, for the first time since I have been in this part of the world, I have some time to look round me and consider my ways.

The trenches are in an awful state. Ankle-deep in mud of about the consistency of cream, for the most part. However, fortunately, the Huns seem to have their spirits somewhat damped by the continuous rain, and have left us alone. Close by here, there is quite a large mining village without a single house intact. It is a most awful sight. They put in some big shells every day. Yesterday they put in one which made a huge cloud of the most wonderful purple smoke. I was very glad to be a comfortable half-mile away from it.

The other day I was riding along some miles back from here when I met Dr Michell. He was doctor for some siege artillery people.

Our Brigadier got a chill up in our last place in the trenches and has gone to hospital with a slight attack of pneumonia. I am very sorry for this, as I liked the old man; but I doubt whether he could have stood a winter here.

We have now got a Colonel of the Grenadier Guards commanding the Brigade. I think he seems to be all right. At any rate he does not worry me. He is rather a knut! having had the Prince of Wales under his charge several times out here. He gave a very favourable account of the Prince, and said he was very plucky and keen to go into all the most dangerous places.

This letter is not progressing very interestingly; but, as the Machine Gun Officer has just remarked to me, there is nothing to tell you about here except mud, horrid chilly wet mud it is too. We are not really so badly off, as we have a fine big dug-out to live in, with a stove.

We are having two more palatial dug-outs made and shall hand our present one over to the men. I expect we shall be in and out of this place till the end of the winter.

I believe we go out again in another few days, but have heard nothing about leave. I am afraid I shall have to wait some time for that now. I get the London news regularly now, which is good.

November 1st, 1915.

This is going to be a begging letter. Will you please ask Sabberton to make me a new uniform? I want a khaki tunic, same as last time, with R.E. Badges and two stars: I am now a First Lieutenant. I also want some breeches.

The Brigade Staff complain that they have missed their ham lately; so I said I would write home and refer the matter to you. I am afraid the things often fall into the mouths of the hungry field-post-office officials; but still it is worth trying again, as sometimes they roll up.

We are not nearly so busy as we were before, and are much more comfortable. Things are settling down again now after the recent advance, and I expect we shall soon settle down and look at one another (we and the Germans) for week after week, like we used to do at Plug Street. Of course, things are still very different to what they were there. I believe we shall go back into reserve again in a few days' time; but I expect we shall come back here later.

I rather hope we do, as we are having the most magnificent dug-outs made, which will not be finished till after we leave. We shall have offices, bathroom, mess-room, and everything complete, and our present dug-outs will be handed over to the men; so they will be set up as well. We shall need to make ourselves comfortable, as this is a very bleak spot.

Well, I am feeling very fit, but am longing to get home again for a bit.

November 10th, 1915.

Many thanks for the chocolates, pipes, tobacco, and above all the ham, which I received to-day. We are now very glad to be out of the trenches again for a short time. Just now, we get

twelve days in the trenches and six days out; so we have a fairly strenuous time. When we are in the trenches we live in dug-outs and get very wet. Last time the trenches got into an awful state, as we had several days' rain. The result was that the trenches got into an indescribable state of mud. The mud got churned up till you had to wade through sort of porridge up to your knees. Of course, I was not so badly off, as I used to get dry socks every night; but the men in the trenches had a very bad time of it. After that, we had a couple of nights' frost, with the result that the mud dried up a bit and got so sticky that people sometimes left their boots behind in it.

My telephone wires which ran up the communication trenches had rather a bad time of it, owing to the sides of the trenches falling in in places. However, we managed to keep through all right. At last I have definite prospects of leave. If all goes well, i.e. unless we get moved to another part of the line, I should roll up some time about November 25th and get a clear week, and by Jove I shall be glad to get away from here for a bit. Also, I am going to spend much filthy lucre which I have accumulated in the last six months, on winter kit, which I badly need.

Sometimes I just long for a good loaf with a book and a pipe, and no details about telephone wires and equipment to worry me.

I received the veils from Mr Yarrow, and I will write and thank him and ask for a periscope. The idea about the oil is being carried out officially now. All the men I believe are going to be made to put wheel-oil on their legs.

I hope the new uniform will come soon, as I am an awful scallywag just now.

Since coming to this part of the world, I have had such a lot to do that I have forgotten my own kit, and when I burnt a hole in the seat of my only remaining pair of breeches I felt things were really getting serious!

Well, now it is time to go to bed, as I have to get up early to-morrow to go and see the next line of trenches we have to occupy.

November 15th, 1915.

The uniform arrived yesterday; so I am looking respectable again now, a thing I have not done for a long time. I also received a ham, woolly waistcoat, shirt, rubber boots, etc., for which many thanks.

When I last wrote we thought we were going back into the trenches; but this was put off for a few days, and we came back into some very comfortable billets in a town some miles back, which we were in before. However, we go in again the day after to-morrow, and I expect it will be cold, as it freezes hard at nights now. As a matter of fact, I think we shall be all right, as they have a magnificent new dug-out for Brigade Headquarters; but the poor devils up in the trenches will have a poor time of it. I don't know whether I told you we have a new Brigadier now. Our Guardsman had to leave, as he was wanted elsewhere, and we now have a Cavalry man. He is a great sportsman and has been out since the beginning, which is a very good thing.

I very nearly managed to get away on leave when they put off our return to the trenches, but unfortunately the Brigade Major and the Machine Gun Officer elected to go, and the General said he did not want three of his Staff to be away at the same time. I did not know I was a Staff Officer before, and I am not sure that I quite appreciate it. However, I think my time will come soon now. After this next go in the trenches I believe the Division will come out for a rest, and then will be my chance.

Chrystal, whom I daresay you remember meeting at Barham, spoke to some German prisoners the other day. They were all very dispirited and said nasty things about their "dickge-bauchte" officers. It looks as though this war was going to be a question of which side gets too fed up to carry on, first.

Well, with luck I may get home about the end of this month, but I cannot be certain, as things seem to be rather in a state of flux. I don't suppose we shall do any more attacking; but they may shift us about somewhere else, or many things may occur to stop my getting away.

Your loving son,
Cecil.

November 17th, 1915.

Dear Nelly,—Many thanks for your letter and the ginger biscuits, which arrived beautifully crisp and tasted of home. Also for *Blackwood* and *Punch*, which I get every week. I should not like to be without my weekly *Punch* now. Just now we are living in luxurious billets in a town some miles back from the firing line; but we go up again the day after to-morrow. How-

ever, we shall be alright, as they have had some very fine dug-outs made for Brigade Headquarters, but the troops in the trenches will have a very chilly time of it.

It freezes at nights now; but this is much better than being kneedeep in mud, which is what we were last time. The trenches are alright in fine weather, but they are beastly after a few days rain. Last time we were in they got into an indescribable state of filth.

Your letters conjure up glorious visions of a most imperial "loaf," with a book and an armchair and a pipe, with no telephones and arrangements for moves to worry one. How I shall enjoy it when it comes!

Give my love to Kate and John.

With much love from

Cecil.

APPENDIX I

LINES OF COMMUNICATION

On Sunday May 16th, 1915, before Cecil left for France, the following description and diagrams were rapidly written and drawn by him for his mother, who spent this last week-end in England with him, and who wished to know approximately where he would finally be placed.

COMMUNICATIONS IN THE FIELD

Explanation of terms.

(1) Overseas base; where troops, stores, etc. land. This is connected by ordinary telegraph to:

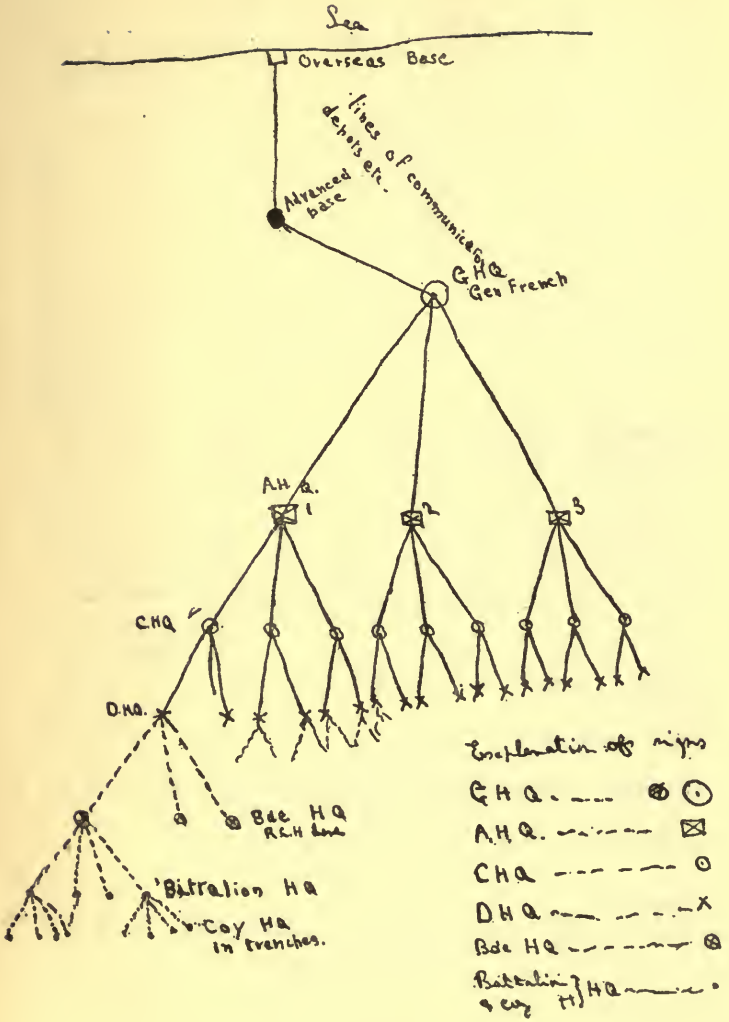
(2) Advanced base where stores are accumulated and issued to the various armies. There will be several of these though only one is shown in the diagram.

(3) G.H.Q. This is where General French and his staff live. This is connected by army telegraphs to the headquarters of the various armies in the field (A.H.Q.). An army consists of three corps; there are 120,000 men in an army.

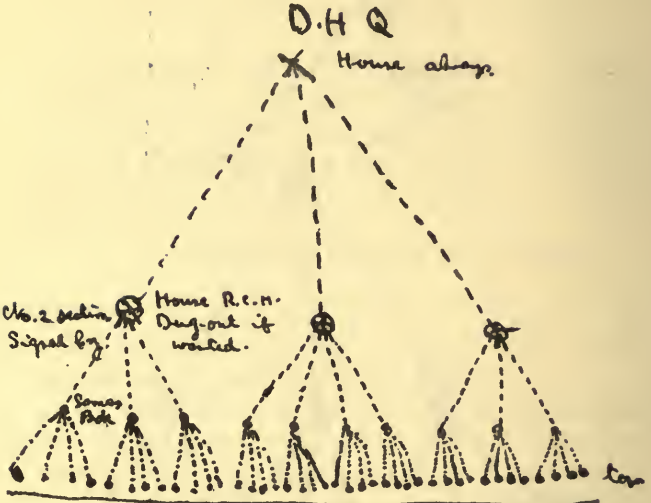
(4) A.H.Q. is connected to the headquarters of its three corps by army telegraphs; if necessary telegraph lines are erected for this purpose.

(5) C.H.Q. (corps headquarters). Any army corps consists of two divisions, i.e. 40,000 men. It is connected to the headquarters of these two divisions by "cable" which is rubber-covered wire laid along the ground.

(6) D.H.Q. (divisional headquarters). A division is commanded by a Major General and consists of three


Sea
Overseas Base
lines of communication
depots etc.
Advanced base
GHQ
Gen French
AHQ.
1
2
3
CHQ
DHQ.
Bde HQ
R.E.H Bde
Battalion HQ
Coy HQ
in trenches.
Explanation of signs
GHQ
AHQ.
CHQ
DHQ
Bde HQ
Battalion & Coy HQ

Divisional signal log. communicati



Company HQ • major
Battalion HQ . Lieut. Colonel
Brigade HQ ⊗ Brigadier general
Divisional HQ × Major general

Lines
Communication arranged by signal Coy. - - - - -

infantry brigades, three field artillery brigades with numbers of Engineers, R.A.M.C., Transport units, etc. In all 20,000 men. Here the "divisional signal company" begins its work.

(7) Infantry brigade headquarters (Bde H.Q.). An infantry brigade is commanded by a Brigadier-General and consists of four battalions, i.e. 4000 men. It is connected to D.H.Q. by "cable" laid by the signal company.

(8) Battalion headquarters. A battalion is commanded by a Lieutenant-Colonel and consists of four companies, in all 1000 men. It is connected to brigade headquarters by cable laid by the brigade signal section of which I am in charge. This is a lighter type of cable than the sort previously referred to and is laid by hand, whereas the other is laid from a special cart.

(9) Company headquarters. A company is commanded by a Major and consists of four "platoons," in all about 250 men. Company headquarters is close up to the trenches and is connected by wire to battalion headquarters.

Distances vary a lot.

Battalion H.Q. anything from right up in the trenches to two miles back.

Brigade H.Q. anything from half to three miles back.

Divisional headquarters anything from one to six miles back.

Army H.Q. may be ten or fifteen miles back.

G.H.Q. anything up to twenty or thirty miles back.

APPENDIX II

THE WEEKLY DISCUSSION SOCIETY

The following notes have been collected from the minute book of the society:

At a meeting held in J. H. Clarke's rooms on Nov. 6th, 1910, the following rules were agreed upon:

The Society shall be limited to five members, unless it shall at any time be unanimously decided otherwise.

Weekly meetings shall be held for discussion, Saturday at 10 P.M. being adopted for the present as the most convenient time.

The chairman at any meeting shall be the owner of the rooms in which it is held.

A business meeting shall be held at the beginning of every term to decide what papers shall be read during the term, in what order, and in whose rooms, and to elect a secretary for the term.

J. H. Clarke was then elected secretary for the remainder of the term, and B. S. Gossling promised a paper on Darwinism for the next meeting.

The following were present:

W. L. Bragg, J. H. Clarke, B. S. Gossling, R. C. Hopkinson, H. Townshend.

The following meetings and papers are recorded:

Nov. 13, 1910	B. S. Gossling	Darwinism.
,, 20, ,,	W. L. Bragg	Relativity.
,, 27, ,,	J. H. Clarke	Double Stars.
Dec. 4, ,,	H. Townshend	The Future of Scientific Ideas.
Jan. 29, 1911	Business Meeting.	
Feb. 5, ,,	J. H. Clarke	Novae.
,, 12, ,,	W. L. Bragg	A New Kinetic Theory (by Professor W. H. Bragg).
,, 19, ,,		
,, 26, ,,	B. S. Gossling	Memory.

Mar. 5, 1911	R. C. Hopkinson	The Fundamental Principles of Thermodynamics.
„ 12, „	H. Townshend	The Notation used in Whitehead and Russell's *Principles of Mathematics*.
Apr. 23, „	Business Meeting.	
„ 30, „	W. L. Bragg	The Nature of White Light.
May 7, „	R. C. Hopkinson	The Breakdown of Materials.
„ 14, „	B. S. Gossling	Certain General Aspects of the Digestive Process.
„ 21, „	J. H. Clarke	The Sun.
Oct. 22, „	H. Townshend	Probability.
„ 29, „	J. H. Clarke	Star Distribution.
Nov. 5, „	R. C. Hopkinson	The Effect of Explosions on Steel Plates and Rods.
Nov. 12, „	W. L. Bragg	Relativity.
„ 19, „	B. S. Gossling	The Structure of Crystals.
„ 26, „		
Jan. 21, 1912	Business Meeting[1].	
„ 28, Feb. 4 „	H. Townshend and W. L. Bragg	Minnkowski's Treatise *Über die Grundgleichungen der Elektro-dynamik*.
Feb. 11, „	B. S. Gossling	The Physiology of Sensation.
„ 18, „	Social Meeting.	
„ 25, „	J. H. Clarke	Star Drift.
Mar. — „	R. C. Hopkinson	The Distribution of Electric Power.
„ — „	G. P. Thomson	The Changes of Structure which occur when surfaces are polished.

The following are the minutes recording the reading of papers by Cecil Hopkinson:

Sun. Mar. 5th, 1911, in B. S. Gossling's rooms. R. C. Hopkinson gave a partly historical account of The Fundamental Principles of Thermodynamics. The Principle of Reversibility of Phenomena gave rise to much discussion.

[1] The programme for the Term, arranged at this meeting, contains the name of G. P. Thomson., the sixth member of the Society.

Sun. May 7th, 1911, in H. Townshend's rooms. R. C. Hopkinson read a paper on The Breakdown of Materials.

As a preliminary to the consideration of the nature of plastic displacement, he explained the granular structure shown by metals under the microscope. The granules consisted of crystalline aggregates, the internal structure of each being uniform; plastic strain consisted in the deformation of these aggregates by the processes of sliding and twinning, both of which were experimentally observed; breakdown by fatigue induced by various kinds of alternating stress was caused by the development of certain sliding planes into cracks; numerical results showed that the breakdown depended on the range of stress experienced. The paper was illustrated throughout by photographs, which greatly contributed to the appreciation of the various points.

Nov. 5th, 1911, in H. Townshend's rooms. R. C. Hopkinson read a paper on The Effects of Explosions on Steel Plates and Rods, dealing with experiments carried out in the previous Long Vacation. The subject of investigation was the form of the impulse communicated to a metal rod, when a dry primer was exploded in contact with one end. This was done by carefully trueing up the end of the rod and the face of a disc of the same diameter, placing the two in very close contact (a coil which magnetized both ensured this), and then measuring the momentum given to the disc by the impulse propagated along the rod. By making the disc of various thicknesses, varying amounts of the total impulse were received by it before the reflected wave of tension caused it to separate from the rod. A few points on the curve representing the impulse waves were so obtained. The results of firing a primer in contact with a thick disc of metal were very interesting. The wave of compression, reflected as a wave of tension, tended to tear off a portion of the plate, of perfectly definite thickness. The rent was more or less great according to the strength of the explosion. In the case of a large sheet a disc or scale was thrown off opposite to where the explosion took place. In one case, a disc showed a second rift behind the first like two nodes in a vibrating system. These rents of course were due to the reflected tension wave.

Of his last paper "On the Distribution of Electric Power" only the title is recorded.

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